MISCELLANEOUS
TRACTS.

WRITTEN BY

Mr. *JOHN DENNIS.*

In Two Volumes.

VOL. I.

CONTAINING,

I. The Advancement and Reformation of Modern Poetry.

II. RINALDO and ARMIDA. A Tragedy.

III. An Anſwer to Mr. COLLIER's Short View of the Stage.

LONDON:

Printed for the AUTHOR. M.DCC.XXVII.

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BRITAN
NICVM

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To the Right Honourable

Richard *Earl of* Scarborough.

Viſcount Lumley *of* Lumley-Caſtle, *and Baron* Lumley *of* Lumley;

Lord Lieutenant of the County of Northumberland;

Colonel of the Second Regiment of Foot Guards, Maſter of the Horſe to the King, one of his Majeſty's moſt Honourable Privy Council, and Knight of the moſt Noble Order of the Garter.

My LORD,

THO' I never had the Honour to approach Your Lordſhip but once, and that by Accident, I am not a Stranger to the Cha-

racter which you have among Men of the beſt Underſtanding; becauſe with ſome of them who have had the Honour to be long known to Your Lordſhip, I have had the Advantage to converſe a great many Years: And 'tis my Knowledge of that Character, which draws upon You this Dedication, as Perſecution too often attends upon great Merit. Every good Writer ought to be very delicate in the Choice of his Patrons, and every one who writes and publiſhes a Book, either believes that he is a good Writer, or impudently and maliciouſly endeavours to impoſe upon the Publick. Upon the Choice of Patrons,

Patrons, not only the Reputation of Authors, but the Reputation and Intereſt of Learning itſelf depends. If human Learning, and eſpecially Poetry, is, generally ſpeaking, ſunk ſo miſerably low among us, unworthy Patrons have been the principal Cauſe of it. Few fooliſh Things would be ſuffered either to be publiſh'd or acted, if there were not Crouds of ignorant Readers, and of fooliſh Spectators to eſpouſe them, and to admire them. How few have we in *England* at preſent, who have Learning, Diſcernment, and Capacity to diſtinguiſh true Merit from falſe; who have Greatneſs of Mind, and Spirit enough to

reſolve to protect it when ſeen, and Authority and Power ſufficient to put that noble Reſolution in Practice! An Author who would now-a-days dedicate his Labours to a Perſon who is every way equal to the Encouragement and Advancement of Learning, has but ſmall Variety of Choice.

Theſe Reflections, my Lord, have encouraged me, and obliged me to lay the following Sheets at Your Lordſhip's Feet. If I had writ only the firſt Treatiſe of it, I believe, that upon reading it, you will be of Opinion, and far be Preſumption from that Belief, that I had deſerved better of the Commonwealth of Learning,

ing, than the Authors of ſo many ſonorous Trifles, who have been too much encourag'd, while I have been too much neglected; that the Poſition which is the Subject of it, *viz.* That Religion is that which gives principally to great Poetry its Spirit, its Sublimity, its Vehemence, and its ſtrongeſt Enthuſiaſm, is very clearly proved; and, therefore, that that Treatiſe is of very great Conſequence to the advancing and improving that inſtructive and noble Art. And I flatter myſelf, that a Perſon of Your Lordſhip's extenſive Knowledge, and familiar Acquaintance with the beſt of ancient and modern Authors, will ſee,

at the ſame Time, that tho' Criticiſm has flouriſh'd for near two thouſand Years, deſcending from ancient *Greece* and *Rome*, to modern *France* and *Italy*, yet that neither *Grecian*, nor *Roman*, nor *Frenchman*, nor modern *Italian*, has treated of this important Point; but that it was left for a Perſon who has the Honour to be Your Lordſhip's Countryman, to aſſert it, and to demonſtrate it. If what I have ſaid, may ſeem to ſome Perſons into whoſe Hands theſe Sheets may happen to fall, to have too great a Tincture of Vanity in it, Your Lordſhip knows very well, that Perſons ſo much, and ſo long oppreſs'd

as

as I have been, have been always allowed to ſay Things concerning themſelves, which, otherwiſe, would have been offenſive. As Your Lordſhip has done me the Honour to ſubſcribe to the two Volumes of *Miſcellaneous Tracts*, and formerly to the two Volumes of *Select Works*, which were printed ſome Years ſince, I have preſumed to dedicate the following Volume to Your Lordſhip, in hopes that it would be kindly received by you, not only for the Reaſons mentioned above, but becauſe it cannot but be very well known to You, that I have been always warmly engaged in the ſame noble Cauſe with your

your Lordſhip; in the true Cauſe of my Country, in the Intereſt of the Revolution, in the Intereſt of the Proteſtant Succeſſion, in His Majeſty's Illuſtrious Houſe, and that as well my particular Studies, as my publick Inclinations and Affections, have deſerv'd a better Treatment than I have unhappily met with. I am,

My LORD,

Your Lordſhip's moſt humble,

and moſt obedient Servant,

John Dennis.

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WHEN the two Volumes of miſcellaneous Tracts have been ſo long depending, and but one of them is at preſent deliver'd to the Subſcribers, I have Reaſon to beg Pardon of all thoſe Gentlemen for ſo great a Delay; which, I make no doubt but they will have the Humanity to grant me, when I have laid before them the ſeveral unforeſeen Obſtructions to the printing theſe two Volumes. In the firſt Place, the Book is printed at my own Expences, as will appear by the Title Page. *2dly*, There are no more printed than are ſubſcribed for, and it will appear by the Liſt of Subſcribers prefix'd to this Volume, that there is a very miſerable Subſcription. But, *3dly*, There has been a wrong Calculation. The Propoſals promiſed but 35 Sheets, and the two Volumes will conſiſt of almoſt double that Number; there being near 30 Sheets in the Volume that is now deliver'd. This wrong Calculation was follow'd by a wrong Diſtribution: For if all the Tracts, deſign'd in the Propoſals for this firſt Volume, had been printed in it, the Bulk of it had been too enormous, and the Volume too unequal to the ſecond. *Laſtly*, I was very unfortunate in giving out the ſign'd Receipts; for tho' above 1000 have been given out, no more has been paid upon them, than will appear

pear in the printed Liſt, and ſome of the Perſons who undertook to diſpoſe of them, had neither the Juſtice to pay the Money, nor to return the Receipts. And, therefore, if there are any Gentlemen who have ſubſcribed, and who are not in the Liſt of Subſcribers, they are deſired to apply themſelves to thoſe of whom they had the Receipts, and to whom they paid their Money. There were other Impediments, which join'd to the former, help'd to retard the Work, as ſeveral of the Subſcribers but too well know. In the mean time, the ſecond Volume is ready for the Preſs, all but two or three Letters relating to *The Paradiſe loſt* of *Milton*. I deſire, therefore, that the Subſcribers, to enable me to deliver the ſecond Volume, would be pleas'd to pay their ſecond Payments upon the Receipt of the firſt, which has been lately deſired by ſeveral Authors. Indeed ſome of them can give a Reaſon for expecting this, which I cannot give for myſelf, *viz.* 'Tis ſtipulated in their Propoſals; but then I can urge twenty in my own Behalf, which they cannot alledge for themſelves, ſome of which are mention'd above.

John Dennis.

THE

THE ADVANCEMENT AND REFORMATION OF Modern POETRY.

A CRITICAL DISCOURSE.

In TWO PARTS.

The FIRST Shewing,
That the Principal Reaſon why the Ancients excell'd the Moderns in the Greater Poetry, was, Becauſe they mix'd Religion with Poetry.

The SECOND Proving,
That by joining Poetry with the Religion Reveal'd to us in Sacred Writ, the Modern Poets might come to equal the Ancient.

Ab Jove principium Muſæ. VIRG.
Per Ambages Deorumq; Miniſteria præcipitandus eſt liber Spiritus. PETRON.

The SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:
Printed for the AUTHOR. *M.DCC.XXV.*

To the Moſt Noble

JOHN,

Lord Marqueſs of NORMANBY, Earl of MULGRAVE, &c.

AND

Knight of the Moſt Noble Order of the GARTER.

My LORD,

MAKE no Queſtion, but that all thoſe Gentlemen, who ſhall happen to be offended at the Newneſs and Boldneſs of the Poſitions, which are the Subject of the following Treatiſe, will accuſe me of want of Judgment, not only for advancing 'em, but for daring to bring 'em under the Protection of ſo diſcerning a Judge as your Lordſhip.

But I deſire thoſe Gentlemen to believe, that if I had had a Mind that my Faults ſhould have lain conceal'd, or would have conſulted my own, more than the Publick Advantage, your Lordſhip is the Perſon to whom, of all Mankind, I would laſt have choſen to have Addreſs'd them. That though you had never writ your admirable Eſſay, I ſhould have been convinc'd by your other Poems, and particularly by your Temple of Death; *a Temple that is conſecrated at the ſame Time to Death and to Immortality! of your perfect Knowledge in Criticiſm, becauſe I have Experience enough to be ſatisfied, that there never was a great Poet in the World, who was not an accompliſh'd Critick.* Horace, *who was one of the Greateſt of the* Roman *Poets, was in the firſt Rank of Judges, and* Virgil *has taken Care to tranſmit to Poſterity, one of the exacteſt Pieces of Criticiſm that ever was writ in the World; tho' indeed it is a Criticiſm by Examples only, of which* Boſſu *vouchſaf'd to write the Rules above Sixteen hundred Years afterwards.*

Thus, my Lord, I am ſufficiently acquainted with your Character to approach you with Awe; but at the ſame Time, I am convinc'd, that they are miſtaken, who believe that the moſt Diſcerning are the moſt Rigid Judges. I am ſatisfied that a Writer has a great deal of Reaſon to be more apprehenſive of half-Criticks, who are govern'd by Opinion, and guided by Prejudice, or ſway'd by partial Affection; and who ſee Faults but in ſome Places, and at ſome particular Times; for ſuch Cenſors are inexorable to the leaſt of our Errors.

Errors. But your Lordſhip, whoſe unclouded Underſtanding ſees all our Faults, where-ever they are, and who knows how difficult, if not impoſſible, it is for us not to Err, will make large Allowances for the Imperfections of Humane Nature, or our particular Frailties, if you diſcover in us the Appearance of any good Quality, which may beſpeak your Indulgence. Imperfect, Partial, Prejudic'd Criticks, have Judgment enough to diſcover Faults, but want Diſcernment to find out Beauties; or if at any Time, by chance, they diſcover them, they are perhaps too Intereſted, or too Envious, or too Fearful, to own them. But as Nature, that has given you ſo many extraordinary Qualities, has conſpired with Fortune, in ſetting your Lordſhip, infinitely above ſo mean a Paſſion as Envy; ſo ſhe has plac'd you as far above the imperious Sway of Opinion, that madly tyrannizes over the Multitude. Your Lordſhip never approves of our Actions, becauſe they have met with Succeſs, but becauſe they deſerve to ſucceed. And here I humbly deſire of your Lordſhip, That in behalf of all the Lovers of Poetry, I may return you Thanks, for the Protection and Patronage of a Great Man deceas'd. 'Tis known to all the obſerving World, that you generouſly began to eſpouſe him, when he was more than half oppreſs'd, by a very formidable Party in the Court of King CHARLES II. *a Faction that wanted neither Power nor Authority to cruſh him; who, beſides that they held the foremoſt Rank in the State, had got Poſſeſſion of the Minds of the People, with whom they had acquir'd a great Reputation, for*

their Knowledge and Capacity in Matters of Wit and Criticiſm. If that Great Man had Faults, your Lordſhip wanted no Diſcernment to find them; but you wanted Malice, Partiality, Prejudice, and the reſt of thoſe ungenerous Obſtacles, that hinder'd others from Diſcovering or Confeſſing his Beauties. Your Lordſhip eaſily found, that he had Beauties which over-weigh'd all Faults; and it was that Conſideration, that engag'd you to ſupport him againſt his powerful Adverſaries. They, upon an unaccountable Pique which they had taken to his Perſon, would have oppreſs'd his growing Merit; Your Lordſhip, in Conſideration of that riſing Merit, cheriſh'd his Perſon, notwithſtanding his pretended Frailties; and while others, to expreſs their Malice to the Man, would have hindred the Advancement, even of that Art, which they pretended to eſteem ſo much; your Lordſhip, on the contrary, by a wiſe, a good natur'd, and a noble Proceeding, cheriſh'd the Man on purpoſe, to make him inſtrumental in advancing the Art. And, as it was after You took him into your Protection, that he writ ſeveral of his moſt valuable Pieces, 'tis to your Lordſhip, that the World is in ſome meaſure indebted, for the greater Number of his Excellencies.

And with the ſame Greatneſs of Mind, with which to advance a noble Art, you rais'd and ſupported a Man oppreſs'd by very powerful Adverſaries; ſo, in order to the ſame Deſign, you pull'd down the Tyranny of Publick Prejudice, and of a Triumphant Opinion. For 'tis known to all the World, that your Lordſhip declared againſt the

Ob-

Obſcenity which was ſhamefully crept into our English *Poetry; at a Time when not only that way of Writing, but the Verſes which you particularly hinted at, were in the very Height of their Reputation. But the Succeſs was anſwerable to the Nobleneſs of your Lordſhip's Attempt; thoſe Verſes have gradually declin'd ever ſince in their Reputation, and nothing of that Nature will now be ſuffer'd by any but the Rabble. So that your Lordſhip has done a very ſignal Kindneſs, not only to a noble Art, but to Vertue itſelf, and have highly oblig'd all Vertuous Men, as well as Lovers of Poetry.*

My Lord, I have mentioned this the more willingly, becauſe it fairly gives me an Opportunity, of confirming, by your Lordſhip's Authority, the Aſſertion which is the Foundation of the following Treatiſe; which is, That Religion gives a very great Advantage for the exciting of Paſſion in Poetry. Your Lordſhip has inform'd us, that Obſcenity and Poetry, are Things that are inconſiſtent. The Aſſertion muſt be granted by all to be unqueſtionably true; for nothing can be poſſibly conſiſtent with an Art, which runs counter to the very End and Deſign of that Art. Now the End of Poetry, is to Inſtruct and Reform, and Obſcenity in Writing corrupts the Manners. But this, on the other Side, is not to be doubted, that Verſes may be produc'd from the Ancient Poets, which are at once Obſcene and Poetical; tho' at the ſame Time it muſt be confeſs'd, that they would have been more fine, if they had been more chaſte. But if any one demands, why Ribaldry ſhould be

entertaining in the Ancient Poetry, when it is ſo plainly inſufferable in the Modern? to him I anſwer, That it can be nothing, but the Religion of the Ancients which makes the Difference; for theirs was very conſiſtent with Obſcenity, whereas ours intirely abhors it. A way of Writing that was authoriz'd by their Religion, could never be ſaid to be utterly inconſiſtent with Inſtruction. Beſides, Paſſion is the principal Thing in Poetry, and tho' Obſcenity has ſomething too groſs and fulſom in it, to conſiſt with the Delicacy of a Tender Paſſion, yet, by mingling with their Obſcene Verſes, their Cupid, *their* Venus, *and the reſt of their Amorous Divinities, they had the Advantage of that other Sort of Paſſion, which we call Enthuſiaſm; whereas the Divinity of our Religion, being utterly abhorrent of any Thing that is impure, ſuch Ribaldry inſerted in our Poetry, can never poſſibly either inſtruct or move.*

The Conſideration of what your Lordſhip has done to advance Poetry, has oblig'd me to lay the following Treatiſe at your Feet; a Preſent, I confeſs, that is altogether unworthy of You; but it is by much the moſt Valuable, that either I have, or ever have had to make; and your Lordſhip has accepted it with the ſame Goodneſs, that the Perſian *King did the Apple: He ſaw that it was all his Subject could do, to teſtify his Acknowledgement; and for that very Reaſon, it was more agreeable to him, than the vain pompous Preſents, of thoſe who believ'd they could add to his Treaſure. I believe, that the very Deſign to improve an Art, which your Lordſhip has actually ſo much advanc'd,*

would

would prevail upon your Goodneſs to excuſe a great many Faults, which you may find in the following Treatiſe.

But, upon mentioning the Deſign of the enſuing Diſcourſe, I find myſelf ſufficiently perplexed. There are ſeveral Things of the laſt Importance, that ought to be preliminary to the Diſcourſe itſelf: And I find that I have ſtrong Temptations upon me of following Mr. Dryden's *Example, and of ſaying to your Lordſhip, what is uſually directed to the Reader in general. But then I conſider, that I have neither Mr.* Dryden's *great Qualities, nor, like him, a Reputation long eſtabliſh'd, nor, what ought to be chiefly conſidered, the Honour of having often approach'd your Lordſhip, to authorize ſuch a Liberty. But yet, on the other Side, the Things that I have to ſay, are of important Conſequence to the Good of the Cauſe which I have undertaken; and I find that I ſhould be wanting to that noble Cauſe, if I ſhould Addreſs myſelf to the Reader in general; and I ſhould be thought by all diſcerning Perſons to proceed as abſurdly, as would a Lawyer, who upon a ſolemn Pleading, ſhould apply himſelf to the Multitude, who have little Knowledge of his Affair, and no Authority to determine it; inſtead of ſpeaking to his Awful Judge, who has a perfect Knowledge of his Cauſe, and a Sovereign Authority to decide it.*

The Deſign of all Poetical Criticiſm, muſt be, if it is Juſt and Good, to advance ſo uſeful and ſo noble an Art as Poetry. And the Deſign of the following Treatiſe, is no leſs than to ſet the Moderns

derns upon an equal Foot, with even admir'd Antiquity. In order to the doing which, I humbly deſire Leave of your Lordſhip, that I may make an Enquiry, in what the Pre-eminence of the Ancient Poets conſiſts; and why I prefer one of the Grecian *Tragedies; as for Example, the* Oedipus *of* Sophocles, *to one of our celebrated* Engliſh *Tragedies; as for Inſtance, the* Julius Cæſar *of* Shakeſpear. *Upon Reflection I find, that the Reaſon is, Becauſe I am more delighted, and more inſtructed by the former; and that for this very Reaſon, becauſe I am more mov'd by it: For I find by Experience, that I am no farther pleas'd nor inſtructed by any Tragedy, than as it excites Paſſion in me. But in order to the diſcovering, why I am more mov'd by the former, than the latter of thoſe Tragedies, I deſire Leave to make an Enquiry, into the principal Differences between them, and that, in all Probability, will determine the Matter.*

I find then, my Lord, That there are Two very ſignal Differences between the Oedipus, *and the* Julius Cæſar. *Firſt, The* Oedipus *is Juſt and Regular, and the* Julius Cæſar *is very Extravagant and Irregular. Secondly, The* Oedipus *is very Religious, and the* Julius Cæſar *is Irreligious. For, with Submiſſion to your Lordſhip's Judgment, I conceive, that every Tragedy, ought to be a very Solemn Lecture, inculcating a particular Providence, and ſhewing it plainly protecting the Good, and chaſtizing the Bad, or at leaſt the Violent; and that, if it is otherwiſe, it is either an empty Amuſement, or a ſcandalous and per-*

pernicious Libel upon the Government of the World. The killing of Julius Cæſar *in* Shakeſpear, *is either a Murder, or a Lawful Action; if the killing* Cæſar *is a Lawful Action, then the killing of* Brutus *and* Caſſius *is downright Murder; and the Poet has been guilty of polluting the Scene, with the Blood of the very Beſt and Laſt of the* Romans. *But if the killing of* Cæſar *is Murder, and* Brutus *and* Caſſius *are very juſtly puniſh'd for it, then* Shakeſpear *is, on the other Side, anſwerable for introducing ſo many Noble* Romans, *committing, in the Face of an Audience, a very horrible Murder, and only puniſhing Two of them; which Proceeding gives an Occaſion to the People, to draw a dangerous Inference from it, which may be deſtructive to Government, and to Human Society.*

Thus, my Lord, I have a great deal of Reaſon to ſuſpect, that the Oedipus *derives its Advantage, from its Regularity, and its Religion; and the Preſumption grows ſtill more ſtrong, when, upon Enquiry, I find, that the fore-mention'd Regularity, is nothing but the bringing ſome Rules into Practice, which Obſervation and Philoſophy have found requiſite for the ſurer exciting of Paſſion. For as this, I think, cannot be conteſted, that of two Combatants, who have equal Strength and equal Courage, he is moſt likely to have the better, who has the moſt Addreſs; ſo in a Contention and Prize of Poetry, between Perſons who have equal Force of Mind, he will be certain to have the Advantage, who is the beſt inſtructed to uſe his Strength.*

If

If any of the Enemies to Regularity, will give themſelves the Trouble to peruſe the Oedipus *of* Sophocles, *with an impartial Eye, he will eaſily diſcern, how inſtrumental the Poetical Art is in leading him from Surprize to Surprize, from Compaſſion to Terror, and from Terror to Compaſſion again, without giving him ſo much as a Time to breathe; and he will as eaſily diſcover, how the Religion that is every where intermix'd with the Play, ſhews all the Surprizes, even when he leaſt expects this, as ſo many immediate ſucceſſive Effects, of a particular dreadful Providence, which make them come, like ſo many Thunder-claps from a Serene Heaven, to confound and aſtoniſh him.*

A Poet is capacitated by that which is commonly call'd Regularity, to excite the ordinary Paſſions more powerfully by the Conſtitution of the Fable, and the Influence which that muſt neceſſarily have, both upon the Words and Thoughts; and Religion, beſides the Influence it will have upon the ordinary Paſſions, will be to a Poet, who has Force and Skill enough to make his Advantage of it, a perpetual Source of extraordinary Paſſions, which is commonly call'd Enthuſiaſm, for the Sentiments and the Expreſſions.

For what concerns Regularity, or the exciting of ordinary Paſſion, enough has been ſaid already. Your Lordſhip has particularly made the Publick a Preſent, which is, I confeſs, but little in Volume, but is magnificent in Value and Ornament; 'tis a Preſent in Jewels, which caſts a farther Luſtre than Treaſures that take up a larger Space, and is more ſolid to thoſe who are near

near it. Our Writers have been ſufficiently told, That writing Regularly, is writing Morally, Decently, Juſtly, Naturally, Reaſonably. The Deſign, my Lord, of the following Treatiſe, is to ſhew, Of what Uſe Religion may be to the Advancement of Poetry. But becauſe all that has been ſaid concerning Regularity, is ſo neceſſary a Preparative to this Deſign, that it would be wholly uſeleſs without it, I hope your Lordſhip will not think it to be foreign to my Purpoſe, if, at a Time when the Rules are neglected by ſome, and ſlighted by others, I beſtow a little Time in proving the Neceſſity of obſerving thoſe; without the ſtrict Obſervance of which, the following Treatiſe will be an empty Amuſement, and we muſt abſolutely deſpair of making any Advancement in Poetry.

The Neceſſity of obſerving Rules, to the Attaining a Perfection in Poetry, is ſo very apparent, that he who will give himſelf the Trouble of Reflecting, cannot eaſily doubt of it. Rules are neceſſary, even in all the inferior Arts, as in Painting and Muſick. If any one ſhould pretend to draw a Picture, without having ever been taught, or without knowing or practiſing any thing of Perſpective or Proportion, but ſhould pretend to ſucceed alone by the natural Force of his Fancy, that Man would certainly be eſteem'd a very impudent and impertinent Perſon.

Your Lordſhip knows, That it is the very ſame Thing in Muſick, that it is in Painting. If any one ſhould pretend to compoſe in Parts, without underſtanding the Grounds, that Perſon would infallibly render himſelf very contemptible. Now if they

pleaſe

pleaſe by Rules in a leſs noble Art, can they reaſonably expect to pleaſe without them, in one that is more noble? If they pleaſe not by Rules in Poetry, how muſt they pleaſe? By Chance! For this is certain, that they muſt do it by one or the other, for there is no Third Way.

There is nothing in Nature that is great and beautiful, without Rule and Order; and the more Rule and Order, and Harmony, we find in the Objects that ſtrike our Senſes, the more Worthy and Noble we eſteem them. I humbly conceive, that it is the ſame in Art, and particularly in Poetry, wich ought to be an exact Imitation of Nature. Now Nature, taken in a ſtricter Senſe, is nothing but that Rule and Order, and Harmony, which we find in the viſible Creation. The Univerſe owes its admirable Beauty, to the Proportion, Situation, and Dependance of its Parts. And the little World, which we call Man, owes not only its Health and Eaſe, and Pleaſure, nay, the Continuance of its very Being, to the Regularity of the Mechanical Motion, but even the Strength too of its boaſted Reaſon, and the piercing Force of thoſe aſpiring Thoughts, which are able to paſs the Bounds that circumſcribe the Univerſe. As Nature is Order and Rule, and Harmony in the viſible World, ſo Reaſon is the very ſame throughout the inviſible Creation. For Reaſon is Order, and the Reſult of Order. And nothing that is Irregular, as far as it is Irregular, ever was, or ever can be either Natural or Reaſonable. Whatever God created, he deſigned it Regular, and as the reſt of the Creatures, cannot ſwerve in the

the leaſt from the Eternal Laws pre-ordain'd for them, without becoming fearful or odious to us; ſo Man, whoſe Mind is a Law to itſelf, can never in the leaſt tranſgreſs that Law, without leſſening his Reaſon, and debaſing his Nature. In fine, whatever is Irregular, either in the Viſible or Inviſible World, is, to the Perſon who thinks right, except in ſome very extraordinary Caſes, either Hateful or Contemptible.

But, as both Nature and Reaſon, which Two, in a larger Acceptation, is Nature, owe their Greatneſs, their Beauty, their Majeſty, to their perpetual Order; for Order at firſt made the Face of Things ſo beautiful, and the Ceſſation of that Order, would once more bring in Chaos; ſo Poetry, which is an Imitation of Nature, muſt do the ſame Thing. I can neither have Greatneſs or Real Beauty, if it ſwerves from the Laws which Reaſon ſeverely preſcribes it, and the more Irregular any Poetical Compoſition is, the nearer it comes to Extravagance and Confuſion, and to Nonſenſe, which is nothing.

But, as in ſome of the numberleſs Parts, which conſtitute this beauteous All, there are ſome appearing Irregularities, which Parts, notwithſtanding, contribute with the reſt, to compleat the Harmony of Univerſal Nature; and as there are ſome ſeeming Irregularities, even in the wonderful Diſpenſations of the Supreme and Sovereign Reaſon, as the Oppreſſion of the Good, and Flouriſhing of the Bad, which yet at the Bottom are rightly adjuſted, and wiſely compenſated, and are purpoſely appointed by Divine Fore-knowledge,

ledge, for the Carrying on the profound Deſigns of Providence; ſo, if we may compare great Things with ſmall, in the Creation of the accompliſh'd Poem, ſome Things may at firſt Sight be ſeemingly againſt Reaſon, which yet, at the Bottom, are perfectly regular, becauſe they are indiſpenſably neceſſary to the admirable Conduct of a great and a juſt Deſign.

No Man knows better than your Lordſhip, that the Renowned Maſters among the Ancients, Homer *and* Virgil, *&c. had too much Capacity, and too much Diſcernment, not to ſee the Neceſſity of knowing and practiſing the Rules, which Reaſon and Philoſophy have preſcrib'd to Poets. They wrote not with a little narrow Deſign, to pleaſe a tumultuous tranſitory Aſſembly, or a Handful of Men, who were call'd their Countrymen; They wrote to their Fellow-Citizens of the Univerſe, to all Countries, and to all Ages; and they were perfectly convinc'd, that tho' Caprice and Extravagance may pleaſe the Multitude, who are always fluctuating, and always uncertain; yet that nothing but what is great in Reaſon and Nature, could be able to delight and inſtruct Mankind. They were clearly convinc'd, that nothing could tranſmit their Immortal Works to Poſterity, but ſomething like that harmonious Order which maintains the Univerſe; that it was partly to that, they were to owe that wondrous Merit, which could be able to render their Fame eternal, to extend and perpetuate the very Languages in which they writ, and to illuſtrate the Glory of their Countries by their own.*

Your

Your Lordſhip knows, that it was towards the Beginning of the laſt Century, that the French, *a ſubtle and diſcerning Nation, began to be ſenſible of this, and upon it ſeveral of their extraordinary Men, both Poets and Philoſophers, began to cultivate Criticiſm. Upon which there follow'd Two very remarkable Things. For, firſt, the Cultivating of the Poetical Art, advanc'd their Genius's to ſuch a Height as was unknown to* France *before; And, ſecondly, the appearing of thoſe great Genius's, was very inſtrumental in ſpreading their Language thro' all the Chriſtian World; and in raiſing the Eſteem of their Nation to that degree, that it naturally prepar'd the Way for their Intrigues of State, and facilitated the Execution of their vaſt Deſigns.*

My Lord, theſe Alterations happen'd in France, *while the* French *reform'd the Structure of their Poems, by the noble Models of ancient Architects; and your Lordſhip knows very well, that the very contrary fell out among us; while, notwithſtanding your Generous Attempt to reform us, we reſolv'd, with an injudicious Obſtinacy, to adhere to our* Gothick *and Barbarous Manner. For, in the firſt Place, our Stage has degenerated, not only from the Taſte of Nature, but from the Greatneſs it had in the Time of* Shakeſpear, *in whoſe* Coriolanus *and* Caſſius, *we ſee ſomething of the Invincible Spirit of the* Romans; *but in moſt of our Heroes which have lately appear'd on the Stage, Love has been ſtill the predominant Paſſion, whether they have been* Grecian *or* Roman *Heroes; which is falſe in Morality, and*

of ſcandalous Inſtruction, and as falſe and abſurd in Phyſicks. For Ambition makes a Man a Tyrant to himſelf, as well as it does to others; and where it once prevails, inſlaves the Reaſon, and ſubdues all other Paſſions. And it was for this very Cauſe, if your Lordſhip will allow me to make this Digreſſion, that in the Two Tragedies that I writ myſelf, I made Love a ſubordinate Paſſion, and ſubjected it in the one to Glory, and in the other to Friendſhip; that ſo I might make them fit to entertain the wiſeſt of our Sex, and the beſt and moſt virtuous of the other. And it is impoſſible to tell you with what extreme Satisfaction, I heard that the laſt of them was not diſpleaſing to You.

But, Secondly, At the ſame Time, that the French *has been growing almoſt an univerſal Language, the* Engliſh *has been ſo far from diffuſing itſelf in ſo vaſt a manner, that I know by Experience, that a Man may travel o'er moſt of theſe Weſtern Parts of* Europe, *without meeting with Three Foreigners, who have any tolerable Knowledge of it. And yet the* Engliſh *is more ſtrong, more full, more ſounding, more ſignificant, and more harmonious than the* French. *I know very well, that a great many will be unwilling to allow the laſt; but I appeal to your Lordſhip, if this is not a convincing Proof of it, that we have Blank Verſe which is not inharmonious, and the* French *pretend to no Poetical Numbers, without the Aſſiſtance of Rhime.*

But it may perhaps be alledg'd, that the Reaſon why the French *has got the Advantage of our Language, is partly from their Situation on the Con-*

Continent, partly from the Intrigues and Affairs which they have with their Neighbours, and partly, becauſe their Language has more Affinity with one of the Learned Languages. But to this I anſwer, That the Germans *are as advantageouſly ſeated as the* French, *for diffuſing their Language; and the* Spaniſh *Tongue is rather nearer related to the* Latin *than is the* French; *and all the World knows, that towards the Beginning of the laſt Century, the Houſe of* Auſtria, *was full as buſie with their Neighbours, as the Houſe of* Bourbon *is now; and yet then neither the* German *nor the* Spaniſh *Tongue made any conſiderable Progreſs. I will not deny, but that the Situation and Affairs of the* French, *may have been of Advantage to them in the diffuſing their Language; but 'tis certainly, the Learning of any Nation that is moſt inſtrumental in it. I make no doubt, but that in Learning, which is uſeful and neceſſary, and barely ſolid, without Ornament, we far ſurpaſs the* French. *Our practical Phyſicians have more Reputation than theirs, even in* France *itſelf; and our practical Divines, have acquir'd more Fame, throughout the Northern Countries of* Europe, *than either the Natives of thoſe Places, or any of the Modern* French *Divines, whether they are Reform'd or Papiſtical. And this laſt, is therefore the more conſiderable, becauſe they writ in our Mother Tongue, whereas the Phyſicians have employ'd a learned Language. But I am very much inclin'd to believe, that 'tis the Polite Learning of any Nation, that contributes moſt to the extending its Language, and Poetry is the*

Branch of Polite Learning, which is the moſt efficacious in it. In order to the proving this, I deſire your Lordſhip's Leave, to examine who they are, who are moſt inſtrumental, in making a Language paſs the Bounds which confine the Original Speakers of it. And they ſeem to me to be the Gentlemen of Neighbouring Nations, who have Time and Opportunity to viſit Foreign Countries, and are capacitated by their Fortunes and their Educations, to cultivate Languages, which they were not born to ſpeak. For, beſides that theſe are the Perſons who are the moſt capacitated to learn them, they have, by the Variety and Multiplicity of their Converſation, moſt Opportunities to ſpread them. Now the Motives that for the moſt Part incite Gentlemen to Study, are Two, Pleaſure and Vanity. But Pleaſure and Vanity, will find their Account abundantly more in Polite Learning, than in Literature which is barely Solid. For, Polite Learning is more eaſy, and has more of Imagination in it, and inſtructs them much better how to varniſh their Defects, and render them agreeable to one another. 'Tis chiefly then, the Polite Learning of any Nation, that ingages the Gentlemen of foreign Countries to apply themſelves to ſtudy the Language of that Nation. But even of Polite Learning, Poetry appears to be the moſt agreeable, and moſt attractive Branch, becauſe it is the moſt moving. And we find by Experience, that in the Learning of thoſe Languages which have been moſt generally known, Poetry has made a very conſiderable Figure. Gentlemen then, in all likelihood, will apply them-

themſelves moſt eagerly to the Study of that Language, whoſe Poetry is very agreeable to them. But that Poetry muſt be moſt agreeable to the Generality of Gentlemen, which is moſt moving, and moſt inſtructive. For, tho' Gentlemen ſtudy to pleaſe themſelves, yet if they are Men of Senſe, they will not be for empty Pleaſure, but will endeavour to be inſtructed and delighted together. Beſides, when Gentlemen begin to ſtudy the Poetry of any Language, the firſt thing they underſtand is the reaſonable Part of it. For the Fineneſs of the Imaginative Part, which depends in great meaſure upon Force of Words, and upon the Beauty of Expreſſion, muſt lie conceal'd from them in a good Degree, till they are perfect in the Language. Thus the Poetry of that Language, which is moſt reaſonable and moſt inſtructive, muſt, in all likelihood, have moſt Attraction for the Gentlemen of neighbouring Nations; and we have ſhewn above, that that is the moſt reaſonable, and moſt inſtructive Poetry, which is the moſt Regular.

My Lord, upon this Foot it is eaſy to determine, whether our Poetry or the French, *has moſt Attractions for the reſt of* Europe. *This is plain, that* Moliere, Corneille *and* Racine, *and* Boileau, *are known in a manner to all the Chriſtian World; whereas* Spencer *and* Milton, Ben Johnſon *and* Shakeſpear, *are Strangers, as it were, to all the World, excepting the Subjects of* Great Britain. *I believe that our Language, by reaſon of the Dependance that it has upon the* Saxon, *is not very difficult to be learnt by the People of the Northern Countries; and in ſhort,*

many of their Clergy have learnt enough of it, to make their Advantage of our Eccleſiaſtical Writings. But both they and their Gentlemen, are almoſt wholly Strangers to our Poetry, whereas the French *Poets are extremely well known to them. But here ſome angry People well immediately ask, If I affirm, that our own is inferior to the* French *Poetry? To ſatisfy both them and the Truth, I am oblig'd to declare (at the ſame Time, ſubmitting this Matter to be decided by your Lordſhip, in the laſt Appeal) That I believe we have naturally more Force, and more Elevation than the* French; *That ſeveral Things in* Shakeſpear, *are ſuperior to any which the* French *Theatre has produc'd; and that in ſome little Poems, which either requir'd no Symmetry, or were writ by thoſe who very well knew how to practiſe it, we are abſolutely ſuperior to them; That at laſt I am not ſo much delivering my own Thoughts, as the Opinions of others; That the very Deſign I have, even in affirming what I do, is to do what lies in my little Capacity, to put our Writers in a Way to make our Neighbours, and with them all* Europe, *ſenſible of the Advantage which we have by Nature; That even our natural Force muſt receive Acceſſion from Art, and augment in proportion as the* French *has done; That both our Force and our Spirit, will, in all likelihood, be augmented by Skill, as Addreſs in the Uſe of our Weapons, very often adds both to our Force and Courage: That a Poem with a Fable, is like a Human Body, and that the Weakneſs of any one Part, influences and diſables, in ſome degree, thoſe which in themſelves*

are

are ſtrong; That if we are not ſhock'd at our own Irregularity, 'tis becauſe it has the Advantage of long Habitude; for we have been us'd to it from our Infancy; but that to our Neighbours, who have conſtantly been us'd to Art and Conduct, it muſt ſeem as aukward, and as diſagreeable, as our Gothick *Cathedrals, would to thoſe* Italians, *who have always frequented St.* Peter's; *and that what I barely call Irregular here, would be term'd by them Indecent, Immoral, Unjuſt, Unreaſonable, Unnatural. In fine, I appeal to your Lordſhip, whether the* French *Dramatick Writers, are not believ'd ſuperior to the* Engliſh, *by all the reſt of* Europe; *tho' at the ſame Time, I am convinc'd, that our Writers, having naturally more Elevation, and our Language more Harmony than theirs, and both our Writers and Language more Force; we want only Art, to make ourſelves as ſuperior to them in Poetry, as we formerly were in Empire.*

And here, my Lord, I fancy that I ſee the Enemies to Regularity in a little Confuſion; they are too well ſatisfied of your Lordſhip's Ability and Impartiality, to decline your Juriſdiction; and they cannot but remember, to their Sorrow, that you have formerly given the Cauſe againſt them.

Upon Suppoſition then, that for the Future, they will inſtruct themſelves in the Poetical Art; I muſt leave it to your Lordſhip to determine, Whether the following Treatiſe may be of any Service to them, and give them ſtill another Advantage over the French, *by directing them to chooſe, or to manage their Subjects, in ſuch a manner, as may*

make them moſt ſuſceptible of Poetry; and that is to find, or make them Religious; a Piece of Criticiſm, which has, I know not how, eſcap'd all the French *Criticks.*

Your Lordſhip knows very well, that ſome of them, as for inſtance, Boileau, *diſcerning the actual Pre-eminence of the Ancients, have fondly believ'd, that they were ſuperior to us by Nature; and that others, as* Perrault, *very juſtly diſdaining to own ſuch a natural Superiority, have very unjuſtly deny'd their actual Pre-eminence. The firſt Part of the following Treatiſe, was intended to ſhew, that the Ancient Poets had that actual Pre-eminence, but that they deriv'd it from joining their Religion with their Poetry; upon which I believe, they were thrown at firſt by Chance. The Deſign of the ſecond Part is to ſhew, That the Moderns, by incorporating Poetry with the Religion reveal'd to us in Sacred Writ, may come to equal the Ancients. But Two Things muſt always be ſuppos'd; the one, That the Poets have Force and Skill equal to the Subjects they treat of; and a Sacred Subject requires ten Times more of both, than a Prophane one. The other is, That this is not to be extended to thoſe ſorts of Poetry, in which the Moderns cannot poſſibly make uſe of their Religion, with the ſame Advantage, that the* Grecians *and* Romans *employ'd theirs, as Epic, Paſtoral, and Amorous Poetry.*

My Lord, The ultimate End of the enſuing Diſcourſe, is to ſhew, That the Intention of Poetry, and the Chriſtian Religion, being alike to move the Affections, they may very well be made inſtru-

mental

mental to the Advancing each other. I have Reaſon to believe, that this Deſign will not be unacceptable to your Lordſhip, not only upon the Account of Religion itſelf, but as you are an Encourager of Arts, and a great Stateſman, who knows, that the bare Endeavour to advance an Art among us, is an Effort to augment the Learning, and conſequently the Reputation, and conſequently the Power, of a great People; That the Flouriſhing of the eſtabliſh'd Religion, muſt have a neceſſary Influence upon the Publick Proſperity; That he who does any Thing to recommend Chriſtianity to the Minds of others, endeavours to promote the Common Good; as, on the other ſide, he who breaks in upon the Revelation, makes a dangerous Attempt, not only upon the Conſtitution, but upon Government in general; That there never was, nor ever can be, any flouriſhing Government without a Reveal'd Religion; That ſeveral Engliſhmen *have loſt, together with the Religion of their Anceſtors, their Honour, their Integrity, and their Publick Spirit; and, that open and avow'd Deiſm has grown up among us, together with abominable Corruptions, not only in the Manners of Private Men, but in the Adminiſtration of Publick Affairs.*

But now, my Lord, I have been ſo intent upon my Cauſe, that it has almoſt made me forget, that for my having detain'd you ſo long, I ought to beg Pardon, not only of your Lordſhip, but of your Friends and the Publick. That by writing this, I am guilty of diverting you from writing or ſpeaking yourſelf, ſomething which is much more important,

portant, either at Home, or in that Illuſtrious Aſſembly, of which you are ſo ſolid and ſhining an Ornament. I humbly deſire of your Lordſhip, to excuſe the Liberty I have taken, and to believe, That I am, with the profoundeſt Reſpect,

My LORD,

Your Lordſhip's moſt Oblig'd,

Moſt Humble, and moſt

Obedient Servant,

JOHN DENNIS.

THE

THE ADVANCEMENT AND REFORMATION OF Modern POETRY.

PART I.

CHAP. I.

The DESIGN *of the Work.*

NOTHING can ſhew the Excellence of Poetry more, than that it has always been eſteem'd by the beſt of Men, and that there has been no extraordinary Man in the World, ſince it came to any Perfection, but who has commended, it or encourag'd it.

And

And yet, to the Confuſion of moſt who have given themſelves Time to think of it, Poetry, that has been encourag'd by ſo many great Princes, is believ'd by ſeveral to have degenerated, rather than to have improv'd by Time; while Phyſicks, Metaphyſicks, and ſome other Arts, that have been very little, or not at all encourag'd, have advanc'd conſiderably.

And, what will appear to be yet more ſtrange, the very Efforts that the Moderns have made to advance Poetry, have done it hurt, becauſe they have proceeded upon ſuch erroneous Principles, as have not only made their Attempts ſucceſsleſs, but have caus'd 'em to miſtake their Errors for their Impotence.

For, ſome of the Moderns, who have been great Admirers of their Contemporaries, which is a modeſt Expreſſion for themſelves, will by no Means allow, that the Ancients have excell'd us. From which Opinion, Preſumption has follow'd, and from Preſumption Security, and from Security Idleneſs.

But Deſpair, on the other Side, has done a great deal more harm, than Preſumption has done on that. For ſome who have been of Opinion that the Ancients have ſurpaſs'd us, have believ'd that they have done ſo, becauſe they were in themſelves ſuperior to us; from which it has happen'd, that they have been ſervilely contented with following their Old Maſters, and moſt of the Beſt of

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the Modern Poetry, has been but a Copy of the Ancient.

Theſe different Opinions have occaſion'd Diſputes, and theſe Diſputes have produc'd Quarrels, which have been maintain'd with a great deal of Heat on both ſides. The Favourers of the Moderns have treated their Adverſaries, as dejected little-ſoul'd Perſons, who have a baſe Opinion of themſelves and of Human Nature, which laſt they have much ado to forgive them, becauſe they are included in the Cenſure.

For, How can it be, ſay they, but a ſcandalous Deſpondence, that obliges us to prefer other Men to Ourſelves, when Reaſon gives us the Preference. For this, they ſay, is paſt all Diſpute, that they who excel others in the ſame kinds of Writing, muſt have ſome Advantage over them. And that Advantage muſt be either from without, or from within, or from the Subjects they treat of. Now we can make it appear, ſay the Favourers of the Moderns, that the Ancient Poets had no external or internal Advantage over us; and that the Advantage of the Subject is rather on our ſide. And this is what the Favourers of the Moderns alledge for themſelves. The Partizans of the Ancients have, on the other ſide, treated the Favourers of the Moderns, as Perſons that are abſolutely ignorant, and without Taſte.

That the Ancients have excell'd us in the Greatneſs of Poetry, they pretend to prove from

from the Authority of all who have univerſally been acknowledged to be the beſt Judges. For, ſay they, the Conſent of theſe, where the Queſtion is concerning a Thing, that is rather to be felt, than to be demonſtrated, is of the laſt Importance. We defy, ſay they, any of the Favourers of the Moderns, to name ſo much as one Modern Critick, who has any Reputation in the World, who does not acknowledge, that the Ancients ſurpaſs us in the Greatneſs of Poetry. For the few, ſay they, who have aſſerted the Pre-eminence of the Moderns, have immediately rendred themſelves ridiculous to all Men, who have any Underſtanding in theſe Affairs, and at length to all the reſt, excepting a little handful of Men, whoſe Arrogance and Obſtinacy, and extravagant Vanity, has been a Comedy to the reſt.

So that the Conſent of the beſt Criticks, continue they, implies the Conſent of all, and the Conſent of Mankind for ſo many ſeveral Ages, concerning a Thing, that is rather to be felt, than to be demonſtrated, is, if not a convincing Proof, at leaſt, a very ſtrong Preſumption. But what has been the Event of this Diſpute on both ſides? Why the Probability of the Arguments, inſtead of working Conviction, has only exaſperated the Spirits of the Parties; and the Favourers of the Moderns, have treated the Lovers of the Ancients as ſo many ſlaviſh Pedants; and

and theſe, on the other ſide, the Favourers of the Moderns, as ſo many ignorant Fools.

Amidſt this Diverſity of Opinions, and theſe contentious Ferments, I thought I ſhould do an important Service to a moſt noble Art, if I could contribute any Thing to the Reconciling the common Friends to Poetry, that they might endeavour the Advancement of the common Cauſe, with greater Force united.

In order then, to the calming the Fury of the contending Parties, I ſhall endeavour to extort important Conceſſions from both, and oblige, on the one ſide, the Favourers of the Moderns to acknowledge, That the Ancients are not ſo weak, as to make the Moderns preſume; and engage, at the ſame Time, the Partiſans of the Ancients to own, That the Ancients are not in themſelves ſo ſtrong, as to make the Moderns deſpair.

And, in order to the gaining this Point with the greater Eaſe, and the making myſelf an agreeable Mediator of Peace, I ſhall endeavour to make an impartial Enquiry into the Merits of the Cauſe, and try to engage both Parties by Turns, by ſupporting their juſt Pretenſions. And whereas the Favourers of the Moderns have juſtly alledged, That all Writers, who ſurpaſs others in the ſame kinds of Writings, muſt do it from ſome internal or external Advantage, or from the Subject itſelf, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew in the Two following Chapters, That the

the Ancients could not derive their Pre-eminence from any external or internal Advantage; and afterwards we ſhall proceed to examine whether they deriv'd it from the Subjects they treated of.

CHAP. II.

That the ANCIENTS *did not excel the* MODENS *by any External Advantage.*

THE External Advantages which one Writer has over another, are chiefly Two; The Aſſiſtance which he receives from the Age in which he writes, and the Encouragement he meets with. Now we ſhall ſhew, That the Ancients did not ſurpaſs the Moderns, on the Account of either of theſe.

Firſt, They had no Advantage in the Aſſiſtance which they receiv'd from the Age in which they writ; on the contrary, the Advantage here, is clearly on the Side of the Moderns: For good Thinking is the Foundation of good Writing, both in Eloquence and in Poetry. Now Thoughts are but the Images of Things, and our Knowledge of Things is greater than that of the Ancients. For ſeveral which they knew, are better known

to

to us, and we know ſeveral which they never knew at all. How many Arts have the Moderns improv'd? How many wonderful Inventions are owing to them? And how many amazing Diſcoveries? From which we have a Supply of Thoughts and Images, that is never to be exhauſted. So that in the Aſſiſtance which we receive, from the Age in which we live, we have the Advantage of the Ancients.

Nor, Secondly, is it from the Encouragement which they received, that the Ancient Poets excell'd the Moderns: Tho' at the ſame Time, I really believe, that Encouragement was one of the Cauſes of the Ancient Excellence of the Orators. For tho' good Thinking is the Foundation of good Writing, both in Eloquence and in Poetry, and the Moderns are qualify'd to think as reaſonably and as ſubtly as the Ancients thought, yet 'tis in theſe Arts, as it is in Architecture, there can be no Beauty nor Greatneſs without Foundation; but 'tis not the Foundation that makes the Greatneſs or Beauty. The chief Deſign of Eloquence is to perſuade, and he perſuading the moſt effectually, who moves his Hearers the moſt; that which makes the Greatneſs and Beauty of Eloquence, is not ſo much the Thinking rightly, tho' without that there can be no Excellence, as thoſe violent Paſſions, that reign and tyrannize over our Souls, in the Speeches of the Ancient Orators,

which they chiefly deriv'd from Ambition. For the moving their Popular Aſſemblies among the Ancient *Grecians* and *Romans*, being almoſt the only Way among them, to arrive at the chief Honours of the State, it can be no Wonder, to thoſe who reflect upon the Force of Ambition, and the Stings it infixes into the Minds of Men, that the Ancient *Grecians* and *Romans*, ſhould be ſo great Maſters of Eloquence. For, being inſtigated and ſtung by Ambition, they not only, were ſupported in the taking ſuch Pains, as the Moderns are utterly uncapable of taking, becauſe they have not the ſame Incentive to ſuſtain them, but being mov'd and fir'd by Ambition themſelves, they the more eaſily rowz'd and inflam'd others; for if any one happens to urge, that the Love of Glory, being alike inſeparable from Moderns and Ancients, they have equal Incentives to Eloquence, I deſire him to take notice, that there is a very conſiderable Difference, between the Love of Glory, barely conſidered, and that which is join'd to Ambition, which is the Deſire of Power and Place. For I deſire him to conſider, what Nouriſhment and Force the Love of Glory, that was in the Minds of the Ancient Orators, muſt neceſſarily have received, from the tumultuous Applauſes of the Popular Aſſemblies, and the glorious Recompences that enſued upon them.

But

But now, if any one thinks, that he has here found out the Reaſon, why the Ancients ſurpaſs'd us in the greater Poetry, becauſe Paſſion making the Greatneſs and Beauty of Poetry, as well as it does of Eloquence (which it certainly does, as ſhall be clearly ſhewn anon) and Paſſion receiving Acceſs from Encouragement, the Ancient Poets writ with a Force ſuperior to that of the Moderns, only becauſe they were more encouraged: If any one, I ſay, thinks at this rate, he will find himſelf very much miſtaken. For tho' I am convinc'd, that Encouragement does very much, yet I am ſatisfied, that the Difference is not chiefly owing to that; For, in the Firſt Place, Tho' the Encouragement which the Ancients gave, was more general than that which the Moderns have met with, yet ſome of the Moderns have been as much encourag'd, as moſt of the Ancients were, and yet fall very much ſhort of them in the greater Poetry, of which *Boileau* and *Racine*, are two illuſtrious Examples. In the Second Place, *Homer*, the moſt admirable of all the Ancients, was not at all encourag'd. In the Third Place, One of the Moderns receiv'd no Encouragement, who has often tranſcendently ſoar'd above both Ancients and Moderns, and that is *Milton*, as ſhall be ſhewn in its proper Place. And, Laſtly, Comedy was as much encourag'd by the *Grecians* and *Romans*, as any other ſort of Poetry; wit-

neſs, what the *Athenians* did for *Ariſtophanes*, and *Scipio* and *Lelius* for *Terence*; and yet I am perſuaded, that the Moderns have ſurpaſs'd the Ancients in Comedy, and ſhall give my Reaſons below, why I make no ſcruple, of preferring *Moliere*, and Two or Three of our own Comic Poets, to *Terence* and *Ariſtophanes*. So that we may ſeek for another Cauſe, of the Excellence of the Ancient Poets, than the Encouragement they met with.

There are Three other Things, which may be number'd among external Advantages, and thoſe are the Climates in which the Ancient Poets liv'd, and the Languages in which they writ, and the Liberty which they enjoy'd. But theſe are not the chief Things from which the Ancients deriv'd their Preeminence. For the greateſt of the *Lyrick* Poets, writ in a Country of downright Blockheads, and one of the greateſt of the *Epick* Poets, in a Country that had loſt its Liberty; and beſides, the *Grecians* enjoy'd all the Advantages of their Climate, and their Language, and their Liberty, long after the Decay of Poetry. 'Tis true, indeed, the *Grecians* and *Romans*, did derive one real Excellence from the Beauty of their Language, and that was the Harmony of their Verſification, in which the Moderns are not likely to equal them. But Harmony of Verſification is not the chief Thing in Poetry, nor does the chief Excellence of the Ancients conſiſt in ſuch a Harmony.

mony. And thus we have ſhewn, that they did not derive their Pre-eminence from any Thing that was External: Let us examine in the next Chapter, Whether the Ancients derived their Excellence from any Internal Advantage.

CHAP. III.

That the Ancients did not ſurpaſs the Moderns from any Internal Advantage.

THERE is nothing more certain, than that he who handles any Subject excellently, muſt do it by the Power of his internal Faculties. And, conſequently, he who treats any Subject admirably, has an inward Advantage over him who treats it ſcurvily. But either that Advantage is naturally deriv'd from the Subject, or it is not. If it is naturally deriv'd from the Subject, in that caſe we can never pretend to deny, that the Ancients had an inward Advantage over the Moderns. All that we ſhall endeavour to prove, is, That they had no internal Advantage over them, abſtracted from the Nature of the Subjects of which they treated.

Now all the internal Advantages, which the Ancients may be ſuppoſed to have had over the Moderns, may be reduc'd to Four. Divine Inſpiration. Inſpiration by Dæmons. A Natural Superiority of the Faculties of the Soul. A greater Degree of Virtue.

The firſt Advantage, that the Ancient Poets may be ſuppos'd to have had over the Moderns, is from Divine Inſpiration. Now the Ancient Poets were the Heathen Theologues, and to affirm, that the Spirit of God ſhould inſpire thoſe, to teach the Adoration of Idols, and inſpire them more than he does the Moderns, who are of the true Religion, would be equally abſurd and blaſphemous.

Nor, Secondly, can they have any Advantage by Inſpiration of Dæmons. For in the firſt Place, 'Tis abſurd to give a ſupernatural Cauſe of an Effect, of which we can give a very natural one. But we can give a very natural Cauſe of the Excellence of the Ancient Poets, as ſhall be ſhewn anon. In the ſecond Place, The Ancients, before *Socrates*, ow'd all their Moral Philoſophy to their Poets. Now, tho' that Philoſophy was only diſpers'd up and down in Sentences, yet had it a natural Tendency to the forming that Syſtem, which afterwards the Diſciples of *Socrates* fram'd from the Mouth of their Maſter. And as that Syſtem was the utter Overthrow of the Heathen Revelation, as we ſhall ſhew anon, any thing that had a natural Tendency to the forming that Syſtem,

Syſtem, could not be the Work of Dæmons. But, Thirdly, Suppoſing the Ancient *Grecian* Poets, were really inſpired by Dæmons, it is hard to imagine, that they ſhould receive a greater Advantage from ſuch an Inſpiration as that, than the Moderns, who apply themſelves to Sacred Poetry, ſhould have from Divine Aſſiſtance.

Nor, Thirdly, can the Ancient Poets be ſuppos'd to have had a greater Share of Virtue than the Moderns. For all the *Grecian* Poets, who were famous for the greater Poetry, flouriſh'd before there was in that Part of the World, any Syſtem of Morality. And, perhaps, moſt of the *Roman* Poetry, is only a Copy of the *Grecian*. Now it is hard to imagine, that they who had no Syſtem of Morality, and no ſupernatural Support, ſhould tranſcend the Moderns in Virtue, who have a perfect Syſtem of Morality, and Divine Aſſiſtance.

Nor, Fourthly, and Principally, had the Ancient any natural Superiority of Faculties over the Modern Poets. For if they ſurpaſs the Moderns in the greater Poetry, out of any Superiority of Faculties, which they had naturally as they were the Ancients, it muſt be by a Superiority of Underſtanding or Imagination, or both. But firſt, it was not from any Superiority of Underſtanding. Becauſe from hence it would follow, that the Minds of Men grow weaker by Succeſſion of Ages, and then the Ancients would

have ſurpaſs'd one another, as they preceded in Time. *Orpheus* and *Muſæus* would have excell'd *Homer*; *Alcæus* and *Stetichorus* *Pindar*; *Theſpis*, *Euripides*; and *Æſchylus*, *Sophocles*; *Tyrtæus*, *Virgil*; and *Alcmon*, *Horace*, which is all abſolutely falſe. But then again, if any one urges, That if the Ancients did not ſurpaſs one another according to Precedence of Time, it was, becauſe Art and and Experience were required to the Perfection of Poetry, and the Younger in Time, had the Advantage of the Elder, both in Art and Experience; to that I anſwer, That ſome of the Poets, who are younger in Time, have, perhaps, the Advantage of thoſe who are older, more by Nature, than they have by Art. For the Tragick and Lyrick Poets, who preceded *Sophocles* and *Pindar*, come more behind them in true Genius, than they go before them in Time. But now if the Ancients did not ſurpaſs one another according to Priorty of Time, why ſhould they excel us? If it be objected, That ſeveral very extraordinary Men happen'd to be born at ſuch and ſuch particular Times; to that I anſwer, That this arriv'd by Providence, or by Chance. If you alledge, that it fell out by Chance, to that I reply, That all the great Poets among the *Grecians*, flouriſh'd within Four hundred Years of one another, and all the great Poets among the *Romans*, within Two hundred Years; and then let me ask you, Whether this look'd like Chance? But

if

if you pretend, that theſe Men, at theſe particular Times, were deſign'd ſuch excellent Poets by Providence, and for that very End, were form'd with Faculties ſo much ſuperior to thoſe who preceded them, and who came after them; then let me ask you, For what Deſign Providence ſhould ſo manifeſtly alter the Courſe of Nature? or, Why that which fell out by Providence then, may not by Providence arrive again?

Beſides, if the Ancient Poets excell'd the Moderns by a Superiority of Underſtanding, it would neceſſarily follow, that they underſtood their Subjects better; which is falſe: For the Subjects of the Epick, Tragick, and Lyrick Poets, are the Virtues, Vices, and Paſſions of Men, which the Moderns ought to underſtand, at leaſt, as well as the Ancients, becauſe they have all the Knowledge of the Ancients, and their own Improvement beſides.

Thus have I endeavour'd to ſhew, that we have no Reaſon to deſpair of equalling the Ancients, becauſe of the Tranſcendency of their Underſtandings. And what has been ſaid about their Underſtandings, may ſerve to ſhew, that they as little excell'd the Moderns in their Imaginations, as they did in the other; tho' ſomething more may be ſaid for the laſt, for the Violence of the Paſſions, proceeding from the Force of the Imagination, and the Corruption of Mankind from the Violence of the Paſſions, and the Cor-

Corruption of Mankind growing greater, as the World grows older; it follows, that the Imaginations of Men muſt grow ſtronger, as the World grows older.

But, Laſtly, how vain is it to urge, that the Ancients excell'd the Moderns by a Superiority of Faculties, when it will appear a little lower, as clear as the Sun, that one of the Moderns, very often excels them, both in his Thoughts and Spirit?

Thus we have endeavour'd to ſhew, that the Ancients did not excel the Moderns in the greater Poetry, from any external Advantage; that is, from the Aſſiſtance which they had, from the Ages in which they writ, or from the Encouragement with which they met. We have ſhewn too, That they did not ſurpaſs them from any internal Advantage, whether it was from Divine Inſpiration, or Inſpiration by Dæmons, or Tranſcendency of Virtue, or Superiority of Faculties. The Advantage then, which the Ancient Poets had over the Moderns, if they had any Advantage, muſt be deriv'd from the Subjects of which they treated.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

That the Ancient Poets deriv'd their Greatneſs from the Nature of their Subjects.

IF the Ancient Poets excell'd the Moderns in the Greatneſs of Poetry; that is, in Epick Poetry, in Tragedy, and in the greater Ode; they muſt neceſſarily derive their Pre-eminence from the Subjects of which they treated, ſince it has been plainly made to appear, that they could not derive it from any external or internal Advantage. And it follows, that the Subjects which were handled by the Ancients, muſt be different from thoſe which have been treated of by the Moderns. And if the Poems, which have been writ by the Ancients, of the forementioned Kinds, were very much greater, than thoſe which have been produced by the Moderns; why then it follows, that the Subjects were very different. But here the Favourers of the Moderns aſſert, That the Advantage which is to be drawn from the Subject, is purely on the Side of the Moderns. For who, for Example, will compare the Atchievements of *Achilles* and *Æneas*,

Æneas, the Event of which was, only the reducing two pitiful paltry Bourgs, with the glorious Actions of ſome of our Modern Captains? But then the Partizans of the Ancients reply, That there is a Difference between one Subject and another, which their Adverſaries ſeem not to have thought of. For, ſay they, Human Subjects, can never differ ſo much among themſelves, as Sacred Subjects differ from Human; for the Difference between the Two laſt, is as great, as that between God and Man; which we know is infinite. Now, ſay they, Sacred Subjects are infinitely more ſuſceptible of the Greatneſs of Poetry, than Prophane ones can be: And the Subjects of the Ancients, in the forementioned Poems were Sacred. Now that we may engage the Lovers of the Ancients in their Turns, by ſupporting their juſt Pretenſions, let us endeavour to ſhew in the following Chapters, That Sacred Poems muſt be greater than Prophane ones can be, ſuppoſing Equality of Genius, and equal Art in the Writers; and that the Poems of the Ancients in the forementioned Kinds were Sacred. But in order to the doing that, we muſt declare what Poetry is, and what is its chief Excellence.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

The Paſſion is the chief Thing in Poetry, and that all Paſſion is either ordinary Paſſion, or Enthuſiaſm.

BUT before we proceed, let us define Poetry; which is the firſt Time that a Definition has been given of that noble Art: For neither Ancient nor Modern Criticks have defin'd Poetry in general.

Poetry then is an Imitation of Nature, by a pathetick and numèrous Speech. Let us explain it.

As Poetry is an Art, it muſt be an Imitation of Nature. That the Inſtrument with which it makes its Imitation, is Speech, need not be diſputed. That that Speech muſt be Muſical, no one can doubt: For Numbers diſtinguiſh the Parts of Poetick Diction, from the Periods of Proſe. Now Numbers are nothing but articulate Sounds, and their Pauſes meaſur'd by their proper Proportions of Time. And the Periods of Proſaick Diction are articulate Sounds, and their Pauſes unmeaſur'd by ſuch Proportions. That the Speech, by which Poetry makes its Imitation, muſt be pathetick,

pathetick, is evident; for Paſſion is ſtill more neceſſary to it than Harmony. For Harmony only diſtinguiſhes its Inſtrument from that of Proſe, but Paſſion diſtinguiſhes its very Nature and Character. For, therefore, Poetry is Poetry, becauſe it is more Paſſionate and Senſual than Proſe. A Diſcourſe that is writ in very good Numbers, if it wants Paſſion, can be but meaſur'd Proſe. But a Diſcourſe that is every where extremely pathetick, and, conſequently, every where bold and figurative, is certainly Poetry without Numbers.

Paſſion then, is the Characteriſtical Mark of Poetry, and, conſequently, muſt be every where: For where-ever a Diſcourſe is not Pathetick, there it is Proſaick. As Paſſion in a Poem muſt be every where, ſo Harmony is uſually diffus'd throughout it. But Paſſion anſwers the Two Ends of Poetry better than Harmony can do, and upon that Account is preferable to it: For, firſt, it pleaſes more, which is evident: For Paſſion can pleaſe without Harmony, but Harmony tires without Paſſion. And in Tragedy, and in Epick Poetry, a Man may inſtruct without Harmony, but never without Paſſion: For the one inſtructs by Admiration, and the other by Compaſſion and Terror. And as for the greater Ode, if it wants Paſſion, it becomes hateful and intolerable, and its Sentences grow contemptible.

Paſſion

Paſſion is the Characteriſtical Mark of Poetry, and therefore it muſt be every where; for without Paſſion there can be no Poetry, no more than there can be Painting. And tho' the Poet and the Painter deſcribe Action, they muſt deſcribe it with Paſſion. Let any one who beholds a Piece of Painting, where the Figures are ſhewn in Action, conclude, that if the Figures are without Paſſion, the Painting is contemptible. There muſt be Paſſion every where, in Poetry and Painting, and the more Paſſion there is, the better the Poetry and the Painting, unleſs the Paſſion is too much for the Subject; and the Painter, and the Poet, arrive at the Height of their Art, when they deſcribe a great deal of Action, with a great deal of Paſſion. It is plain then, from what has been ſaid, that Paſſion in Poetry muſt be every where, for where there is no Paſſion, there can be no Poetry; but that which we commonly call Paſſion, cannot be every where in any Poem. There muſt be Paſſion then, that muſt be diſtinct from ordinary Paſſion, and that muſt be Enthuſiaſm. I call that ordinary Paſſion, whoſe Cauſe is clearly comprehended by him who feels it, whether it be Admiration, Terror or Joy; and I call the very ſame Paſſions Enthuſiaſms, when their Cauſe is not clearly comprehended by him who feels them. And thoſe Enthuſiaſtick Paſſions, are ſometimes ſimple, and ſometimes complicated, of all which we ſhall ſhew Examples

amples lower. And thus I have ſhewn, that the chief thing in Poetry, is Paſſion: But here the Reader is deſir'd to obſerve, that by Poetry, we mean Poetry in general, and the Body of Poetry; for as for the Form or Soul of particular Poems, that is allow'd by all to be a Fable. But Paſſion is the chief Thing in the Body of Poetry; as Spirit is in the Human Body. For without Spirit the Body languiſhes, and the Soul is impotent: Now every Thing that they call Spirit, or Genius in Poetry, in ſhort, every Thing that pleaſes, and conſequently, moves, in the Poetick Diction, is Paſſion, whether it be Ordinary or Enthuſiaſtick.

And thus we have ſhewn, what the chief Excellence in the Body of Poetry is, which we have prov'd to be Paſſion. Let us now proceed, to the Proofs of what we propounded, That Sacred Subjects, are more ſuſceptible of Paſſion, than Prophane ones; and that the Subjects of the Ancients, were Sacred in their greater Poetry, I mean either Sacred in their own Natures, or by their Manner of handling them.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

That Paſſion is more to be deriv'd from a Sacred Subject, than from a Prophane one.

WE have prov'd that Paſſion is the chief Thing in Poetry, and that Spirit or Genius, and in ſhort, every Thing that moves, is Paſſion. Now if the chief Thing in Poetry be Paſſion, why then the chief Thing in great Poetry, muſt be great Paſſion. We have ſhewn too, that Paſſion in Poetry, is of Two ſorts, ordinary Paſſion, or Enthuſiaſm. Let us now proceed, to convince the Reader, that a Sacred Poem, is more ſuſceptible of Paſſion, than a Prophane one can be; which to effect, let us ſhew Two Things, That a Sacred Subject, is as ſuſceptible of ordinary Paſſions, as a Prophane one can be; and more ſuſceptible of the Enthuſiaſtick.

The firſt is evident from Experience: For the Poetry among the Ancients, which ſhall be hereafter prov'd to be Sacred, had in it greater ordinary Paſſions, than their Human Poetry either had, or could poſſibly have.

'Tis now our Buſineſs to ſhew, That Religious Subjects are capable of ſupplying us with more frequent and ſtronger Enthuſiaſms, than the Prophane. And in order to the clearing this, let us inquire what Poetical Enthuſiaſm is. Poetical Enthuſiaſm, is a Paſſion guided by Judgment, whoſe Cauſe is not comprehended by us. That it is a Paſſion, is plain, becauſe it moves. That the Cauſe is not comprehended, is ſelf-evident. That it ought to be guided by Judgment, is indubitable. For otherwiſe it would be Madneſs, and not Poetical Paſſion. But now let us inquire, what the Cauſe of Poetical Enthuſiaſm is, that has been hitherto not comprehended by us. That Enthuſiaſm moves, is plain to Senſe; why then it mov'd the Writer: But if it mov'd the Writer, it mov'd him while he was thinking. Now what can move a Man while he is thinking, but the Thoughts that are in his Mind? In ſhort, Enthuſiaſm, as well as ordinary Paſſions, muſt proceed from the Thoughts, as the Paſſions of all reaſonable Creatures muſt certainly do; but the Reaſon why we know not the Cauſes of Enthuſiaſtick, as well as of ordinary Paſſions, is, becauſe we are not ſo us'd to them, and becauſe they proceed from Thoughts, that latently, and unobſerv'd by us, carry Paſſion along with them. Here it would no hard matter to prove, that moſt of our Thoughts, are naturally attended with ſome ſort, and ſome

ſome degree of Paſſion. And 'tis the Expreſſion of this Paſſion, which gives us ſo much Pleaſure, both in Converſation, and in Human Authors. For I appeal to any Man, who is not altogether a Philoſopher, whether he is not moſt pleas'd with Converſation and Books that are Spirited. Now how can this Spirit pleaſe him, but becauſe it moves him? or what can move him but Paſſion? We never ſpeak, for ſo much as a Minute together, without different Inflexions of Voice. Now any one will find, upon Reflexion, that theſe Variations, and thoſe Inflexions, mark our different Paſſions. But all this paſſes unregarded by us, by reaſon of long Uſe, and the incredible Celerity of our Thoughts, whoſe Motion is ſo ſwift, that it is even to ourſelves imperceptible; unleſs we come to reflect, and every one will not be at the Trouble of that. Now theſe Paſſions, when they grow ſtrong, I call Enthuſiaſtick Motions, and the ſtronger they are, the greater the Enthuſiaſm muſt be. If any one asks, What ſort of Paſſions theſe are, that thus, unknown to us, flow from theſe Thoughts? to him I anſwer, That the ſame ſort of Paſſions flow from the Thoughts, that would do from the Things of which thoſe Thoughts are Ideas. As for Example, If the Thing that we think of is great, why then Admiration attends the Idea of it; and if it is very great, Amazement. If the Thing is pleaſing and delightful, why then Joy and

Gaiety flow from the Idea of it; if it is ſad, Melancholy; if 'tis miſchievous and powerful, then the Imagination of it is attended with Terror; and if 'tis both great, and likely to do hurt, and powerful, why then the Thought of it, is at once accompanied with Wonder, Terror and Aſtoniſhment. Add to all this, that the Mind producing theſe Thoughts, conceives by Reflexion a certain Pride, and Joy, and Admiration, as at the conſcious View of its own Excellence. Now he who ſtrictly examines the Enthuſiaſm that is to be met with in the greater Poetry, will find, that it is nothing but the foremention'd Paſſions, either ſimple or complicated, proceeding from the Thoughts from which they naturally flow, as being the Thoughts or Images of Things, that carry thoſe Paſſions along with them; as we ſhall ſhew by Examples, in the following Chapter.

But theſe Paſſions that attend upon our Thoughts, are ſeldom ſo ſtrong, as they are in thoſe kind of Thought, which we call Images. For they being the very lively Pictures of the Things which they repreſent, ſet them, as it were, before our very Eyes. But Images are never ſo admirably drawn, as when they are drawn in Motion; eſpecially if the Motion is violent. For the Mind can never imagine violent Motion, without being in a violent Agitation itſelf; and the Imagination being fir'd with that Agitation, ſets the very Things before our Eyes;

Eyes; and conſequently, makes us have the ſame Paſſions that we ſhould have from the Things themſelves. For the warmer the Imagination is, the more preſent the Things are to us of which we draw the Images; and therefore, when once the Imagination is ſo inflam'd, as to get the better of the Underſtanding, there is no Difference between the Images, and the Things themſelves; as we ſee, for Example, in Fevers and Madmen.

Thus have we ſhewn, that Enthuſiaſm flows from the Thoughts, and conſequently, from the Subject from which the Thoughts proceed. For, as the Spirit in Poetry, is to be proportion'd to the Thought, for otherwiſe it does not naturally flow from it, and conſequently, is not guided by Judgment; ſo the Thought is to be proportion'd to the Subject. Now no Subject is ſo capable of ſupplying us with Thoughts that neceſſarily produce theſe great and ſtrong Enthuſiaſms, as a Religious Subject: For all which is great in Religion, is moſt exalted and amazing; all that is joyful, is tranſporting; all that is ſad, is diſmal; and all that is terrible, is aſtoniſhing.

CHAP. VII.

The Cauſes of Poetical Enthuſiaſm, ſhewn by Examples.

THE Enthuſiaſm that is found in Poetry, is nothing but the forementioned Paſſions, Admiration, Joy, Terror, Aſtoniſhment, flowing from the Thoughts which naturally produce them. For Admiration, together with that Pride, which exalts the Soul at the conceiving a great Hint, gives Elevation; Joy, if 'tis great, gives Tranſport, and Aſtoniſhment gives Vehemence. But now let us ſhew by Examples, how this was done, and let us begin with that admirable Ode of *Horace*, which is the Third of the Third Book.

Juſtum, & tenacem propoſiti virum,
Non civium ardor prava jubentium,
Non vultus inſtantis tyranni
Mente quatit ſolida; neque Auſter,
Dux inquieti turbidus Adriæ;
Nec fulminantis magna Jovis manus:
Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum ferient ruinæ. That is,

The

The Man, the brave Man, who is reſolv'd upon a right and a firm Principle, is ſure never to have his ſolid Vertue ſhaken, neither by the Rage of the giddy Multitude, nor by the Frowns of an inſulting Tyrant, nor by the Fury of the roaring South, that turbulent Ruler of the tempeſtuous Adria; *no, nor by the Red Right Hand of Thundring* Jove: *Nay, ſhould the World's diſjointed Frame come ruſhing down with a diſmal Sound upon him, its Ruins might Cruſh, but they could never Shake him.* Now 'tis plain, that in the Original there is a great deal of Enthuſiaſm. But let us obſerve a little what this Enthuſiaſm is. Upon Obſervation we ſhall find then, that in the fore mentioned Verſes there is Elevation, Severity and Vehemence, and conſequently, there is ſomething Admirable in them, and Terrible, and Aſtoniſhing. Now why ſhould we feel theſe Paſſions, in reading theſe Thoughts, unleſs the Paſſions naturally attend them, when they are expreſs'd as they ſhould be? But Admiration, as we have ſaid above, muſt come from ſomething that is Great, and Terror from ſomething that is Powerful, and likely to hurt; and Aſtoniſhment from ſomething that is very Terrible, and very likely to hurt; that is, from Things that are ſo, or from their Ideas. The Reader, upon examining the fore-mentioned Verſes, will find, that the Thoughts in them all are Great and Terrible, and ſome of them are Aſtoniſhing.

But here I deſire the Reader to obſerve, Three Things: Firſt, The admirable Gradation of Thought here. How the Poet riſes from ſomething that is Terrible, to ſomething that is more Terrible, till he comes at laſt to ſomething Aſtoniſhing and Amazing. How from the Rage of the mad Multitude, he proceeds to the Frowns of a Tyrant that ſtands threatning by: How he riſes from thence to a Storm at Sea, and from thence to the Wrath of *Jove*, expreſs'd in the dreadful Thunder, and from thence to the final diſmal Diſſolution of all Things. The next Thing that I deſire him to obſerve, is, How the Spirit of the Poet riſes with his Thoughts, which is a ſure Sign, that the one is nothing but the Paſſions that attend on the other. And the Third Thing that the Reader is to remark, is, That the Poet could not carry his Enthuſiaſm higher after the ſecond Thought, without having recourſe to Religion. For he who knows any Thing of the Pagan Syſtem, knows that the Three laſt Thoughts are taken from their Religion.

Let us now ſet before the Reader an Image, that only by its Greatneſs will move him, and exalt him. The Paſſage is in the Firſt Book of *Milton*'s *Paradiſe Loſt*, where he thus deſcribes *Lucifer*.

——*He*,

——*He, above the reſt,*
In Shape and Geſture proudly eminent,
Stood like a Tow'r; his Form had yet not loſt
All her Original Brightneſs, nor appear'd
Leſs than Archangel ruin'd, and th' Exceſs
Of Glory obſcur'd; as when the Sun, new ris'n,
Looks thro' the horizontal miſty Air,
Shorn of his Beams, or, from behind a Cloud,
In dim Eclipſe, diſaſtrous Twilight ſheds
On half the Nations, and, with Fear of Change,
Perplexes Monarchs; Darkned ſo, yet ſhone
Above them all th' Archangel; but his Face
Deep Scars of Thunder had intrench'd.

I deſire the Reader, would give himſelf the Trouble of comparing theſe Ten Lines, with the Ten that preceded them, and then to tell me, Why the Spirit ſhould be ſo much greater in theſe, than it is in the others, unleſs it proceeded from the Greatneſs of the Ideas? or, How the Greatneſs of the Ideas could cauſe it, but by infuſing into the Poet, Admiration, and a noble Pride, which expreſs'd, make the Spirit; which is ſtately and majeſtick till the laſt, and then it grows vehement, becauſe the Idea which cauſes it, is not only great, but very terrible. For all the afflicting Paſſions that are violent, are expreſs'd with Vehemence. The Reader cannot but obſerve of himſelf, that the greateſt of theſe noble Ideas, is taken from Religion;

——*But*

——*But his Face*
Deep Scars of Thunder had intrench'd.

Now let us conſider Two very Maſterly Images, out of the Second Book of *Virgil*; the Firſt is the Hewing down of a Tree, which appear'd ſo admirable to *Julius Scaliger*, that he affirm'd, that *Jupiter* could never have mended it; and the Second gave Occaſion for that incomparable Statue of *Laocoon*, which I ſaw at *Rome*, in the Gardens of *Belvidere*, and which is ſo aſtoniſhing, that it does not appear to be the Work of Art, but the miſerable Creature himſelf, like *Niobe*, benumm'd and petrify'd with Grief and Horror.

The Firſt, beſides it Greatneſs, carries Terror along with it. *Virgil* compares the Deſtruction of *Troy*, which had been Ten Years beſieg'd, to the Fall of a Mountain Aſh, at whoſe Root the labouring Swains had been a long Time hewing with their Axes.

Ac veluti ſummis antiquam in montibus ornum,
Cum ferro acciſam, crebriſq; bipennibus inſtant
Eruere agricolæ certatim; illa uſq; minatur,
Et tremefacta comam concuſſo vertice nutat;
Vulneribus donec paulatim evicta, ſupremum
Congemuit, traxitq; jugis avulſa ruinam.

And

And as when ſturdy Swains, with frequent Strokes,
Hewing with all their ſtretcht-out Arms, let drive
At the firm Root of ſome aſpiring Oak,
Which long the Glory of the Mountain ſtood,
That ev'ry Moment formidably nods,
And ſhakes the lofty Glories of its Crown,
Till, broken by repeated Wounds, at laſt,
Down it comes ruſhing with a fatal Groan,
And tears the Earth, and rends the ſolid Rock,
And ſtill is dreadful in its hideous Fall.

Now here I deſire the Reader to conſider, how the Poet raiſes his Spirit, as ſoon as he ſets his Image in Motion, and brings in Terror to his Relief.

——— *Illa uſque minatur,*
Et tremefacta comam concuſſo vertice nutat.

For all the Paſſions, when they are very great, carry Fury along with them, and all the afflicting Paſſions, together with Fury, carry Vehemence and Severity. And the Poet hereby ſetting his Image in motion, had ſet it before his Eyes, and ſo made it the more terrible. Let us now conſider that of *Laocoon.*

Laocoon, ductus Neptuno ſorte ſacerdos,
Solennes tauram ingentem mactabat ad aras.
Eſce autem gemini a Tenedo tranquilla per alta,
Horreſco referens, immenſis orbibus angues
Incumbunt pelago, pariterq; ad litora tendunt:
Pectora

Pectora quorum inter fluctus arrecta, jubæque
Sanguineæ exsuperant undas: pars cætera pontum
Pone legit, sinuatq; immensa volumine terga,
Fit sonitus, spumante salo: jamq; arva tenebant,
Ardentesq; oculos suffecti sanguine, & igni,
Sibila lambebant linguis vibrantibus ora.
Diffugimus visu exangues, illi agmine certo
Laocoonta petunt: & primum parva duorum
Corpora natorum serpens amplexus uterq;
Implicat, & miseros morsu depascitur artus.
Post ipsum auxilio subeuntem, ac tela ferentem
Corripiunt, spirisq; ligant ingentibus: & jam
Bis medium amplexi, bis collo squammea circum
Terga dati, superant capite & cervicibus altis.
Ille simul manibus tendit divellere nodos,
Perfusus sanie vittas atroque veneno:
Clamores simul horrendos ad sidera tollit:
Quales mugitus, fugit cum saucius aram
Taurus, & incertam excussit cervice securim.

Which in *English* Blank Verse runs thus;

Laocoon, *now great* Neptune's *Priest, by Lot,*
The solemn Sacrifice, a mighty Bull,
Prepar'd to slay; when, lo! from Tenedos
Two huge Twin Serpents of prodigious Size,
(A shiv'ring Horror chills all my Life Blood,
At the bare Thought, and freezes ev'ry Nerve!)
Their monstrous Folds incumbent on the Main,
With equal haste come rowling tow'rds the Shore.
Their spotty Breasts erect above the Waves,
And bloody Crests, look fearful to the Eye.

Their

Their other Parts come winding through the Flood,
In many a waving Spire; the Sea reſounds,
While with the ſcaly Horrors of their Tails,
They ſwinge the foaming Brine.
And now they land! now dart their flaming Eyes,
Diſtain'd with Blood, and ſtreaming all with Fire!
We, pale and bloodleſs at the diſmal Sight,
All in a Moment, trembling, diſappear.
They to the Prieſt direct their flaming Way,
And of his little Sons, each ſeizing one,
Around their Limbs they twine their ſnaky Spires,
And on their little trembling Joints they feed:
A diſmal Feaſt! And while their wretched Sire,
With piercing Shrieks, comes ruſhing to their Aid,
At him, with Fury both, at once, they dart,
And claſping him with their vaſt pois'nous Folds,
Twice round his Waſte they twiſt, and twice his Neck;
And ſtretching o'er his Head, their diſmal Heads
And lofty Creſts, upon the dying Wretch
They dreadfully look down: He, all in vain,
With all his Might, his brawny Muſcles ſtrains,
And ſtretches his extended Arms, to tear
The pois'nous and inextricable Folds,
And from their Intrails ſqueezes horrid Gore.
And now, tormented, hideouſly he roars,
And, ſtamping, ſtares from his diſtracted Eyes.
Thus madly bounds about the impetuous Bull,
When from his Wound he ſhakes th'uncertain Ax,
And, bellowing, from the bloody Altar broke.

And now here we find a deal of Enthuſiaſm; which is nothing but the Elevation, and Vehemence, and Fury proceeding from the

the Great, and Terrible, and Horrible Ideas. For the Poet ſetting his Image in ſo much Motion, and expreſſing it with ſo much Action, his inflam'd Imagination ſet it before his very Eyes, ſo that he participated of the Danger which he deſcrib'd, was ſhaken by the Terror, and ſhiver'd with the Horror. And what is it but the Expreſſion of the Paſſions he felt, that moves the Reader in ſuch an extraordinary Manner. But here let us obſerve, how the Spirit of the Poet riſes, as the Danger comes nearer, and the Terror grows upon him.

———*Jamque arva tenebant,*
Ardenteſque oculos, &c.

And now they land, &c.

Let us conſider beſide, what prodigious Force all this muſt have in the Connexion, where Religion adds to the Terror, increaſes the Aſtoniſhment, and augments the Horror. For 'twas by the Direction of *Minerva*, that this terrible Incident was brought about, who had combin'd with *Juno* to deſtroy the *Trojans*, as has been at large declar'd in a former Critical Treatiſe. And thus we have endeavour'd to ſhew, how the Enthuſiaſm proceeds from the Thoughts, and conſequently from the Subject. But one Thing we have omitted, That as Thoughts produce the Spirit, the Spirit produces and makes the Expreſſion; which

which is known by Experience to all who are Poets: for never any one, while he was rapt with Enthuſiaſm, wanted either Words or Harmony; and is ſelf evident to all who conſider, that the Expreſſion conveys and ſhews the Spirit, and therefore muſt be produced by it. So that from what we have ſaid, we may venture to lay down this Definition of Poetical Genius: Poetical Genius, in a Poem, is the true Expreſſion of Ordinary or Enthuſiaſtick Paſſions proceeding from Ideas to which it naturally belongs; and Poetical Genius, in a Poet, is the Power of expreſſing ſuch Paſſion worthily: And the Sublime is a great Thought, expreſs'd with the Enthuſiaſm that belongs to it, which the Reader will find agreeable to the Doctrine of *Cecilius*. *Longinus*, I muſt confeſs, has not told us what the Sublime is, becauſe *Cecilius*, it ſeems, had done that before him. Tho' methinks, it was a very great Fault, in ſo great a Man as *Longinus*, to write a Book which could not be underſtood, but by another Man's Writings; eſpecially when he ſaw that thoſe Writings were ſo very defective, that they were not likely to laſt. But tho' *Longinus* does not directly tell us what the Sublime is, yet in the firſt Six or Seven Chapters of his Book, he takes a great deal of Pains to ſet before us the Effects which it produces in the Minds of Men; as for Example, That it cauſes in them Admiration and Surprize; a noble Pride, and a noble Vigour, an invincible

vincible Force, tranſporting the Soul from its ordinary Situation, and a Tranſport, and a Fulneſs of Joy mingled with Aſtoniſhment. Theſe are the Effects that *Longinus* tells us, the Sublime produces in the Minds of Men. Now I have endeavour'd to ſhew, what it is in Poetry that works theſe Effects. So that, take the Cauſe and the Effects together, and you have the Sublime.

CHAP. VIII.

Recapitulation; and, That the Subjects of the Ancients, in their greater Poetry, were Sacred.

WE have now ſhewn, that if the Ancients excel the Moderns in Epick Poetry, in Tragedy, and in the greater Ode, they derive not their Pre-eminence from any external, nor from any internal Advantage, abſtracted from the Nature of the Subject, and that, conſequently, they muſt draw it from the Nature of the Subject itſelf. Then we ſhew'd, that the greateſt Difference between one Subject and another, is that of Sacred and Prophane. Then we ſhew'd, that Paſſion was the chief Thing in Poetry, and great Paſſion in great Poetry, and that either

either ordinary Paſſion or Enthuſiaſm. Then we ſhew'd that Sacred Subjects were as ſuſceptible of ordinary Paſſion, as the Prophane, and more ſuſceptible of the Enthuſiaſtick, which laſt we ſhew'd by Reaſon, and by Example. So that to give you a convincing Reaſon why the Ancients did, and muſt, for the moſt part, excel the Moderns in Epick Poetry, in Tragedy, and the greater Ode, we have nothing to do, but to ſhew, that thoſe Poems among the Ancients were always Sacred, becauſe it is very well known, that among the Moderns, they are for the moſt part Prophane. Firſt, then, for Tragedy, That is very well known to have been Sacred in its Inſtitution, and it is full as plain, that it muſt have been Sacred in its original Nature, and after that the Epiſodes began to intrench upon the Chorus, it ſtill continued Sacred, as having Apoſtrophes, Revelations, Invocations, Machines. And ſo had the greater Ode. And as for Epick Poetry, in that the eldeſt of the Muſes after the firſt Invocation, was believed to dictate every Thing; beſides, that the Gods were every where introduced in it, and all Things were done by their Miniſtry. For which Reaſon it is apparent, that the Moderns in theſe ſort of Poems, writing upon Prophane Subjects, cannot poſſibly equal the Ancients, ſuppoſing theſe laſt to have had but an equal Share of Genius with them.

CHAP. IX.

That the Ancient Poets deriv'd their Pre-eminence from Religion, ſhewn by ſeveral other Things; and firſt from this, That they did not excel the Moderns in Poetry in which they made no uſe of Religion.

THAT the Ancients in the *Epos*, in the Ode, and in Tragedy, deriv'd their Pre-eminence from Religion, may appear from ſeveral Things that have not yet been mention'd, and firſt of all from this, That they did not excel the Moderns in Poetry in which they drew no Advantage from Religion, as in Comedy, and in Satire; and that in Hiſtorical Poetry, as the *Pharſalia* of *Lucan*, whenever the Ancients excell'd the Moderns, they drew their Advantage from Religion.

For Comedy, the Ancients are ſo far from excelling the Moderns in it, that the Advantage is clearly on our Side. For I ſhall make no Scruple of preferring *Moliere*, and Two or Three of our own Comick Poets, to

to *Terence* and *Ariſtophanes*. For whether the Deſign of Comedy, be to inſtruct or to pleaſe, or both, the Modern Comedy anſwers both thoſe Ends, incomparably better than the Ancient. If the End of Comedy be only to pleaſe, why then it muſt pleaſe by the *Ridiculum*; for that which is the End of any ſort of Writing whatever, muſt be attain'd by a Way, that muſt diſtinguiſh that ſort of Writing. As for Example, The End of Tragedy, and of Epick Poetry, is to inſtruct: But the latter inſtructs chiefly by Admiration, and the former by Compaſſion and Terror. Now Admiration diſtinguiſhes Heroick Poetry, and Compaſſion and Terror Tragedy, from all other other ſorts of Poems whatever; but the only Thing that diſtinguiſhes the Pleaſure which Comedy gives us, from the Pleaſure that we receive from all other ſorts of Poems whatever, is the *Ridiculum*. Now the *Ridiculum* in the Modern Comedy, is beyond Compariſon higher, than it is in the New Comedy of the Ancients, and beyond Compariſon more in Nature, than it is in the Old one. And it is higher both in the Incidents, and in the Characters. For if the End of Comedy is to pleaſe, and that End is to be attained by the *Ridiculum*, why then the *Ridiculum* ought to be ſpread throughout it. But beſides, that it is higher in the Modern Comedy, there is a greater Variety of it both in the Incidents, and in the Characters, and that Variety muſt make it the

more delightful. For a Uniformity in this Caſe takes away from the Surprize, and without Surprize the *Ridiculum* cannot ſubſiſt. And beſides, that the Moderns have a greater Variety both of Characters and Fables, they have a greater Variety of Style. For the Style of the Comedy of the Ancients, and particularly of *Terence* his Comedy, does not ſeem to me to be varied enough, nor proportioned enough to the Characters. The Slave in *Terence* ſpeaks with the ſame Elegance, and the ſame Grace, for the moſt Part, that his Maſter does. But look into the *Plain-Dealer*, and you ſhall find as many Styles in it, as there are Characters. For *Manly*, *Freeman*, *Plauſible*, *Olivia*, *Novel*, *Eliſha*, the Widow *Blackacre* and *Jerry*, have each of them a different Dialect, which, beſides the Variety, muſt be farther delightful, becauſe 'tis an exact Imitation of Nature. For as every Man has a different Form of Face, he has a different Turn of Mind, and conſequently, a different Caſt of Thought, and a different Manner of Expreſſion. Add to this, that the Moderns ſeem to know Men better, and to dive into ſome latent Foibles, into ſome ridiculous Receſſes, that were utterly unknown to the Ancients. So that in every good Comedy, at the ſame Time that we are diverted with the *Ridiculum*, we are entertained with Diſcoveries, which is very delightful; but if the chief Deſign of Comedy be to inſtruct, as I make no queſtion

ſtion but it is, becauſe publick Spectacles, ought to contribute to the publick Advantage, we ſhall find, that the Modern Comedy anſwers this End too, better than that of the Ancients. If the Deſign of Comedy be to inſtruct, it muſt inſtruct by the *Ridiculum*, for the very ſame Reaſon, that we affirm'd it muſt pleaſe by it, becauſe it is to be diſtinguiſh'd by the Means, by which it attains its End. But nothing but the *Ridiculum* can diſtinguiſh Comedy from all other Poems. But Comedy inſtructing by the *Ridiculum*, that *Ridiculum* ought to be both in the Fables and Characters. Firſt, It ought to be in the Characters, or elſe it cannot be in the Incidents, and conſequently there can be no Comedy: For the Manners of the Agents produce the Incidents. Secondly, It ought to be in the Incidents, or elſe it would follow, that there would be Manners in the Agents which are not productive of Action, which ought not to be. Beſides, Comedy inſtructs by its Fables or Characters, or both. If it inſtructs only by its Characters, as ſome Criticks have thought, yet the *Ridiculum* ought to be in the Action too, or the Serioufneſs of the Incidents would check the Inſtruction, as well as the Pleaſure which we receive from the Characters. But if it inſtructs by its Fable and Action, as certainly it ought to do, why then the *Ridiculum* muſt be in the Incidents which are Parts of the Action, becauſe Comedy in-

ſtructs by the *Ridiculum*; and conſequently, this laſt ought to reign chiefly in the Cataſtrophe, which ought to be the moſt inſtructive Part of the Fable, and to make the ſtrongeſt Impreſſion. Beſides, there are but two Ways of inſtructing by Example, and thoſe are, The ſhewing Men ridiculous for their Faults, or Unfortunate; to repreſent them expos'd by them, or chaſtis'd for them. But if Comedy ſhews Men unfortunate, it uſurps upon Tragedy. The great Diſorders of the World are caus'd by great Paſſions, and they are puniſh'd by Tragedy. The little Paſſions cauſe little Diſquiets, and make us uneaſy to ourſelves, and one another, and they are expos'd by Comedy. For, that which we call Humour in Comedy, is nothing but a little ridiculous Paſſion, and the expoſing it in Comedy, is thought to be Poetical Juſtice ſufficient for it. Not but that at laſt, the Characters in Comedy, may be chaſtis'd at the Cataſtrophe, for Faults which they have committed; but that very Chaſtiſement ought to be wrapt up in the *Ridiculum*, or the Cataſtrophe cannot be truly Comical. For as the Cataſtrophe of a Tragedy, ought to be the moſt Tragical Part of it, becauſe Tragedy inſtructing by Compaſſion and Terror, thoſe two Paſſions ought to be moſt ſtrongly mov'd in the moſt inſtructive Part of the Fable; ſo the Cataſtrophe of a Comedy, ought to be the moſt Comical Part of it, for the very ſame Reaſon;

ſon; for Comedy inſtructing by the *Ridiculum*, as has been ſhewn above, the moſt inſtructive Part of it ought be moſt ridiculous. But now if 'tis the End of Comedy to inſtruct, and it inſtructs by the *Ridiculum*, the Modern Comedy muſt be more inſtructive than the Ancient could be. For the *Ridiculum* in the old Comedy of the Ancients, was very often out of Nature, both in the Characters, and in the Incidents, and conſequently could not inſtruct. And the *Ridiculum* in their new Comedy, being not ſo ſtrong as it is in ours, neither in their Characters, nor in their Incidents, could not inſtruct ſo powerfully; and the Moderns having greater Variety of it, both in their Perſons and Action, the Inſtruction in the Modern Comedy muſt be the more extenſive, beſides, that the Variety of Action and Incidents muſt make our Cataſtrophes more ſurprizing, and conſequently more ridiculous.

So that the Modern Comedy pleaſing more, and inſtructing more, and ſo anſwering the Two Ends of Comedy better than the Ancient did; it follows, That the Moderns in Comedy, are preferrable to the Ancients.

As the Moderns have excell'd the Ancients in Comedy, they have equall'd them in Satire. There has been a long Diſpute among the Criticks, whether *Horace* or *Juvenal* ought to be preferr'd in Satire. Their Excellencies indeed are very different,

and therefore a Compariſon is not eaſy to be made. *Horace* had a great deal of Pleaſantry, and *Juvenal* a great deal of Force, at leaſt for his Way of Writing. Now *Boileau* has juſtly got a great Reputation, both for Force and Pleaſantry, and conſequently, is equal to either of the *Roman* Satiriſts: And here it will not be amiſs to obſerve, that the very ſame Poets among the Moderns, who have ſurpaſs'd the Ancients in Comedy, and who have equall'd them in Satire, have fall'n infinitely ſhort of them, when they have attempted the greater Poetry, as *Ben Johnſon* comes behind them in Tragedy, and *Boileau* in the greater Ode.

As for Hiſtorical Poetry, any one who is acquainted with *Lucan*, may have obſerv'd, that where that Author is very great, he derives his Greatneſs from Religion; as he does, for Example, in *Cato*'s Speech, which is a kind of Abſtract of the Religion and Metaphyſicks of the Stoicks.

Ille Deo plenus tacitâ quem mente gerebat,
Effudit dignas Adytis e pectore voces.
Quid queri Labiene jubes? An liber in armis
Occubuiſſe velim, potius quam regna videre?
An ſit vita nihil, ſed longam differat ætas?
An noceat vis ulla bono? Fortunaq; perdat
Oppoſitâ virtute minas? Laudandaque velle
Sit ſatis, & nunquam ſucceſſu creſcat honeſtum.
Scimus, & hoc nobis non altius inſeret Hammon
Haremus cuncti ſuperis, temploque tacente

Nil

Nil facimus non ſponte Dei: nec vocibus ullis
Numen eget, dixitq; ſemel naſcentibus auctor
Quicquid ſcire licet, ſteriles nec legit arenas
Ut caneret paucis, merſitq; hoc pulvere verum
Eſtne Dei ſedes, niſi terra, & pontus, & aer,
Et cælum, & virtus? Superos quid quærimus
ultra?
Jupiter eſt quodcunq; vides, quocunq; moveris
Sortilegis egeant Dutii, ſemperq; futuris
Caſibus anticipes, me non oracula certum,
Sed mors certa facit, pavido fortiq; cadendum eſt
Hoc ſatis eſt dixiſſe Jovem.

Which is in *Engliſh* thus.

Full of the Godhead in his Breaſt inſhrin'd,
He in theſe Words explains his mighty Mind;
(Words which oraculous Jove, *might dictate to*
Mankind.)
And what ſhould I of theſe vain Prieſts inquire,
If I had rather thus in Arms expire,
With theſe high Thoughts, and this unconquer'd
Fire,
Than live inglorioufly, to hail a King,
And my great Soul to vile Subjection bring?
What ſhould I ask, if nothing be in Death,
And nothing in this idle Vapour, Breath?
If the Good only, be ſupremely Great,
Of Fortune independant, and of Fate?
If the brave Patriots, glorious in Diſtreſs,
And Tyrants, deſpicable in Succeſs?
If in magnanimous Attempts to fail,
Merits Renown, as much as to prevail?

This

This ſhou'd I ask? All this I know, I feel,
And how ſhou'd Hammon *inborn Truths reveal?*
Why ſhould the Powers their Sacred Wills explain,
Since all we do, ſay, think, thoſe Powers ordain,
Our Wills are link'd to theirs, by Fate's eternal Chain.

God wants not Man, his Meaning to convey,
But in one Breath, ſaid all that he can ſay,
In that informing Breath, which kindled up our Clay.

Nor wou'd he build in barren Sands, his Seat,
That he to Fools, ill Verſes might repeat,
And hide eternal Truths, in this obſcure Retreat.

To Jove *what certain Seat can be conſign'd?*
Where can the World's Great Ruler be confin'd?
This univerſal Frame's the Seat of that eternal Mind.

Why ſhou'd we ſeek him in this Myſtick Grove?
Where-ever Eye can reach, where-ever Thought can rove,
Subſtance and Space, is all unbounded Jove.

Let thoſe who live in Doubt (a fooliſh State!)
Conſult theſe mighty Confidents of Fate,
Her irreverſible Decrees, my Conſtancy create.

Alike the Coward, and the Brave muſt fall;
This Mighty Jove *has once declar'd for all,*
And theſe inſpiring Sounds, to Roman *Actions call.*

Lucan is very far from being ſo exalted every where as he is here. For, where-ever he is very Great and Poetical, he muſt be ſo by the Greatneſs of ordinary Paſſion, or by the

the Force of Enthuſiaſm. But ordinary Paſſions can neither be very frequent in an Hiſtorical Poem; nor, if they could, could they be frequently great. Becauſe there being no Fable, and no Art, they can ſeldom be rightly prepar'd. Nor can the Enthuſiaſms be frequently great, where there is no Religion. But Religion cannot be frequent in an Hiſtorical Poem, unleſs it is in Sacred Hiſtory. If any one would give himſelf the Trouble of comparing the Twelfth Book of the *Æneis*, with the Seventh of the *Pharſalia*, he would find that *Virgil* is Ten Times greater than *Lucan*, and that *Lucan*'s Subject, as far as it is Human, is Ten Times greater than *Virgil*'s. For, I hope, no Man will compare *Æneas*, take him without his Divine Dependencies, with *Julius Cæſar*, the Greateſt of Men, nor the Combat that made the former King of the *Latins*, with the Battel that made *Cæſar* the abſolute Maſter of the World. From hence it would follow, if the Greatneſs of *Virgil*'s Subject conſiſts in any thing Human, that either *Lucan*'s writing in his Seventh Book, is Twenty Times below his Subject, or that the Writing of *Virgil* in his Twelfth Book, is Twenty Times above his. But *Lucan*'s Writing in his Seventh Book, is not Twenty Times below his Subject, as any Modern Poet that ſhould be oblig'd to handle that Subject after him, would be forc'd to confeſs. Nor is the Writing of *Virgil* in the laſt of the *Æneis*, ſo many Degrees

Degrees above his Subject. For if it is, then that laſt Book is ſcurvily writ, becauſe the Thoughts and Expreſſions ought to be proportion'd to the Things. But the laſt Book of the *Æneis* is admirably writ. What then can be the Meaning of all this? Why the Meaning muſt be, that *Virgil*'s Subject, is Twenty Times greater than *Lucan*'s. But *Lucan*'s Subject is Ten Times greater than his, as far as it is only Human, which has been made to appear. The Excellency then, of *Virgil*'s Subject muſt come from ſomething that is not Human, and that muſt be from Religion; ſo *Virgil*'s Greatneſs and his Enthuſiaſm comes from his Machines, and the Miniſtry of the Gods, and the other Parts of his Religion; and *Lucan*'s Littleneſs, from his want of thoſe Machines, and that Miniſtry. *Petronius Arbiter*, *Lucan*'s Contemporary, was very ſenſible of this. For he, tho' an *Epicurean* profeſt, was ſo ſenſible of the Advantage that Poetry deriv'd from Religion, that in the Beginning of his *Satiricon*, after he has been exclaiming againſt the Writers of the Times, and particularly againſt *Lucan*, he offers this Expedient for the reſtoring Poetry to its former Greatneſs, that they ſhould reſtore it to its former Religion. But to return to *Lucan*; He is often tedious and ſpiritleſs, becauſe his Subject is not only merely Human, but it is ſometimes impious. For *Lucan* had conceiv'd the moſt extravagant Deſign in the World. For at

the

the ſame Time that he ſets up for a Stoick, he writes a Book to prove, either, that there is no ſuch Thing as Providence in the World, or that the Gods favour'd Injuſtice.

Victrix cauſa Deis placuit, ſed victa Catoni.

Before I make an End of this Chapter, I beg the Reader's Leave that I may digreſs for a Moment, becauſe the Digreſſion is of very great Importance to Poetry.

We have ſhewn, that the Subject of *Virgil* in the Twelfth of his *Æneis*, is very much greater than *Lucan*'s is in the Seventh of his *Pharſalia*. We have ſhewn too, at the ſame Time, that *Lucan*'s was greater as he found it, and that *Virgil*'s was greater as he made it. For I hope, I need ſay nothing at this Time of Day, to prove, that the Religious Part of *Virgil*'s Subject was invented and diſpos'd by the Poet: Which may ſhew the Benefit of Art, that is, of Rules in Poetry. For, tho' 'tis by the Genius of a Writer, that is, by a Soul that has the Power of expreſſing great Paſſions, whether ordinary or enthuſiaſtick, that we treat a Subject with Dignity equal to its Greatneſs, yet 'tis Art that makes a Subject very great, and, conſequently, gives Occaſion for a great Genius to ſhew itſelf.

And thus we have ſhewn, that the Ancients did not excel the Moderns in Comedy and Satire, which are not Sacred Poems, as having

having neither Invocations, Apoſtrophes, Revelations or Machines; at leaſt, the new Comedy had none of all theſe, and the old one only ſome low Burleſque, or elſe Groteſque ones. We have ſhewn too, that the Sacred Poetry of the Ancients, was beyond Compariſon greater than their Hiſtorical Poetry, becauſe it was not Sacred.

CHAP. X.

That in their Sacred Poetry, in which the Ancients excell'd the Moderns, thoſe Places were greateſt and moſt Poetical, that had moſt of Religion.

BUT as the Ancients did not ſurpaſs the Moderns in Poetry that was not Sacred, ſo in that ſort of Poetry where they did excel them, they were never ſo admirable, as where they were moſt Religious. Now the Paſſages of the Ancient Poets, which ſeem to have moſt Religion in them, are either thoſe Addreſſes by which Men approach'd the Gods, as Invocation, Apoſtrophes, and the like; or thoſe Condeſcenſions, by which the Gods com-

communicated themſelves to Men, as Revelations, Machines, *&c.* the Firſt of which are Duties that belong to univerſal Natural Religion, the Second to Religion which is Reveal'd, Extraordinary and Miraculous. Every Thing that is great in Poetry, muſt be great by the Genius that is felt in it, which is the chief Thing in Poetry, according to the general Acceptation of it; and the principal Thing in the *Materia Poetica*, or the Body of Poetry. Now all Genius is Paſſion, becauſe it moves, and all Paſſion is either Enthuſiaſm or ordinary Paſſion, as we declar'd above. Now, that even ordinary Paſſion in Poetry is heighten'd by Religion, we ſhall endeavour to prove. And we ſhall moſt inſiſt upon thoſe ordinary Paſſions, which are moſt to be found in Tragedy, and in Epick Poetry. For, as for the greater Ode, that ſeems to be the peculiar Province of Enthuſiaſm, and ordinary Paſſions in that are more rarely to be met with.

Firſt then, Admiration, which is the reigning Paſſion in Epick Poetry, I mean, that which is admirable in the Action of the Hero, is heighten'd by Revelations, by Machines, and the Miniſtration of the Gods. For that Miniſtration, thoſe Machines, and thoſe Revelations are all miraculous. And the Man who was admirable before for his extraordinary Valour, and his Native Greatneſs, becomes more wonderful, when we behold

behold him the Eſteem and immediate Concern of Heaven, when we ſee him the peculiar Care of Providence, when we find the Order of Nature inverted, the Skies grown factious upon his Account, and Gods deſcending to ſuſtain or oppoſe him.

But, Secondly, Terror and Compaſſion, which are the reigning Paſſions in Tragedy, are heighten'd by Religion. Tragedy, ſays *Ariſtotle* in his *Poetick*, is the Imitation of an Action which excites Compaſſion and Terror. Now thoſe two Paſſions proceed from Surprize, when the Incidents ſpring one from another againſt our Expectation: For thoſe Incidents, continues the Philoſopher, are always more admirable, than thoſe which arrive by Chance; which is evident from this, ſays he, That even of accidental Things, thoſe are always the moſt Wonderful and moſt Surprizing, which at the ſame Time that they arrive by Chance, ſeem to fall out by Deſign, and by a certain particular ſecret Conduct; of which Nature was what they relate of the Statue of *Mitys* at *Argos*, which fell upon his Murderer, and kill'd him upon the Spot, in the midſt of a great Aſſembly: For that by no means, ſays the Philoſopher, ſeems to be the Work of Chance. From whence it follows, ſays he, of neceſſity, that thoſe Fables where there is this Conduct, will always ſeem preferable to thoſe that have it not. Thus *Ariſtotle* declares, That the Wonderful in Tragedy, as well as in Epick

Epick Poetry, is heightned by Religion, that thoſe Tragical Incidents that appear to have moſt of Providence in them, are always moſt Moving and Terrible. The Reaſon is plain, For all our Paſſions are grounded upon the Love of Ourſelves; and Terror and Compaſſion ſpring from the Calamities of our Equals; that is, of thoſe who being in Circumſtances reſembling ours, and committing Faults which we either commit, or to which we are, liable, are upon that, unfortunate. For the more there appears to be of Providence in the Puniſhment, the more we pity the Perſons. For if their Calamities appear to be the Work of Chance, they might as well have happened to thoſe who have not committed ſuch Faults, as to thoſe who have. And therefore a Train of Incidents, which, contrary to our Expectation, ſurprizingly produce one another, is neceſſary, becauſe the more plainly the Puniſhment appears the Reſult of the Faults, and the more clearly we are convinc'd of this, when we leaſt expect it, Providence appears the more in the Caſe, and our Security is ſhaken the more, and the more we are mov'd and terrified. But Religion does not only heighten thoſe Paſſions which are great in themſelves, as Admiration and Terror are; for Admiration raiſes the Soul, and every Thing that is terrible, is certainly great to him to whom it is terrible, but it ennobles thoſe which are com-

monly baſe and dejected; as for Example, Grief; witneſs that Paſſage in the Paſſion of *Dido*:

Teſtatur moritura Deos, & conſcia fati
Sidera. ——

And that Noble Apoſtrophe afterwards:

Sol, qui terrarum flammis, &c.

And that Sublime Apoſtrophe of *Seinon*, in the Second Book:

—— *Ille dolis inſtructus, & arte Pelaſgâ,*
Suſtulit exutas vinclis, ad ſidera palmas:
Vos, æterni ignes, & non violabile veſtrum
Teſtor numen, ait; vos ara, enſeſque nefandi,
Quos fugi; vittæq; Deûm, quas hoſtia geſſi, &c.

But to come to the other Sort of Paſſion, which gives Poetry its Force and its Greatneſs; Religious Enthuſiaſm muſt neceſſarily be greater than Human Enthuſiaſm can be, becauſe the Paſſions that attend on Religious Ideas, when a Man is capable of reflecting on them as he ſhould do, are ſtronger than thoſe which attend on Prophane Ideas, as has been ſaid above, and has been partly ſhewn by Examples. And as ordinary Paſſion is heightned by Religion, ſo Human Enthuſiaſtick Paſſions are heightned by Religious Enthuſiaſm. We ſhall give an Example of this in Terror, by which I mean, not

not that common Paſſion, which *Ariſtotle* treats of in his Rhetorick, and in his Poetick, and of which we ſpoke in the former Part of this Chapter; but that Enthuſiaſtick Terror, which ſprings from the Ideas unknown to him who feels it. *Virgil* in his Firſt Book of the *Æneis* deſcribes a Tempeſt, which carries double Terror along with it; the Ordinary one, which ſprings from the Concern which we have for the Hero; and the Enthuſiaſtick one, which the Ideas would carry along with them, tho' they were ſeparated from that Concern which we feel for the Hero. The Deſcription is Grave and Severe, and Exalted, becauſe the Poet was mov'd by the terrible Ideas. For that which is terrible, is always great to him to whom it is terrible, as we ſaid before; and that which is great is admirable, and then he who is terrified is always ſerious, and very much in earneſt. The ſame Deſcription where the Terror is at the Height, is vehement.

——Inſequitur cumulo præruptus aquæ mons,
Hi ſummo in fluctu pendent: his unda dehiſcens
Terram inter fluctus aperit, furit æſtus arenis.

Becauſe that which is very terrible, is wonderful and aſtoniſhing, and he who is aſtoniſh'd, being tranſported beyond himſelf, muſt of neceſſity expreſs himſelf with that ſort of Fury which we call Vehemence. *Virgil*, by ſetting ſo many terrible Images

in Motion, had ſet this Tempeſt before his Eyes, or rather had tranſported himſelf, as it were, into it. Now, any one who has been upon the Brink of a Wreck, and, conſequently, has been very much terrify'd himſelf, and ſeen others aſtoniſh'd, cannot but have felt the ſame Motions that he feels, in reading this Paſſage, and cannot but have obſerv'd, that others who felt them, expreſs'd themſelves with the ſame Fury and Vehemence that the Poet does, tho' not with the ſame Elegance. But tho' this Storm is terrible in it ſelf, and wonderful, yet the Machines, which prepare, and raiſe, and allay it, very much add to its Greatneſs and genuine Terror, and it is quite another Thing when it is conſider'd with the Cauſe of it, which is the Anger of *Juno*, and the Compliance of *Æolus*, and with that which follow'd upon it, which is the Indignation of *Neptune*, and the Exertion of his abſolute Power.

The Paſſages of the ancient Poets that were moſt Religious, were their Invocations, Apoſtrophes, or the like; or thoſe which contain'd the miraculous Part of their Religion, their Signs, Apparitions, Oracles, and other Revelations.

For their Invocations, Apoſtrophes, and the like, which were all of them either a ſort of Prayers, or Divine Atteſtations, they are moſt of them very Sublime, and attended with a ſtrong Enthuſiaſm. And how could

could it be otherwiſe, but that the ancient Poets, who were Men of great Learning, of great Paſſions, great Eloquence, and great Parts, when with Study and Pains, and with all their Endeavours to be Enthuſiaſtick, they addreſs'd themſelves to their Gods, ſhould be extremely agitated; when we ſee very plainly, that a ſort of Modern Enthuſiaſts, who have neither Learning nor Parts, nor the leaſt Tincture of good Letters, are, even in their Extemporary Prayers, diſturb'd with very fierce Enthuſiaſms?

For the Apoſtrophe, we have given Examples of it already, and therefore we ſhall only ſay here, that *Longinus* mentions it as one of the Figures that contribute the moſt to the Sublime. For the Invocation, we ſhall bring an Example of it, from the Seventh Book of *Virgil*, and the Reader is deſir'd to take notice, what Addition of Enthuſiaſm attends it.

Nunc age, qui Reges, Erato, quæ tempora rerum,
Quis Latio antiquo fuerit ſtatus, advena claſſem
Cum primum Auſoniis exercitus appulit oris,
Expediam: & primæ revocabo exordia pugnæ.
Tu vatem, tu Diva mone, dicam horrida bella:
Dicam acies, actoſque animis in funera Reges,
Tyrrhenamque manum, totamq; ſub arma coactam
Heſperiam, major rerum mihi naſcitur ordo:
Majus opus moveo.———

And from *Horace*, *Lib.* 3. *Ode* 4.

Deſcende cælo, & dic, age, tibia
Regina, longum, Calliope, melos;
Seu voce nunc mavis acuta,
Seu ſidibus citharave Phœbi.
Auditis? an me ludit amabilis
Inſania? audire, & videor pios
Errare per lucos, amœnæ
Quos & aquæ ſubeunt, & auræ.

But to come to thoſe Paſſages of the ancient Poems, in which the miraculous Part of their Religion was contain'd, and their Revelation more nearly concern'd, as their Signs and Wonders, and their private Inſpirations, but above all, the Apparitions of their Gods and their Oracles, it is no Wonder if thoſe Paſſages, ſpeaking of Things that ſtrike Mankind with the laſt Aſtoniſhment, have almoſt all the Enthuſiaſm of which the Mind of Man is, with Reaſon, capable. *Horace* is by no means a cold Writer, and yet he is far from writing every where with the ſame Degree of Fury, and the ſame Rapture, that he does in the Beginning of the Nineteenth Ode of the Second Book.

Bacchum in remotis carmina rupibus
Vidi docentem (credite poſteri)
Nymphaſque diſcentes, & aures
Capripedum Satyrorum acutas.

Evæ!

Evæ! recenti mens trepidat metu,
Plenoque Bacchi pectore turbidum
Lætatur. Evæ! parce, Liber,
Parce, gravi metuende thyrſo.

Nor is *Virgil* every where ſo Enthuſiaſtick, as he is in the Beginning of the Sixth Book, where the *Cumean* Sibyl rages with the *Delphick* God.

Ventum erat ad limen, cum virgo, Poſcere fata
Tempus, ait: Deus! ecce Deus! Cui talia fanti
Ante fores, ſubito non vultus, non color unus,
Non comtæ manſere comæ; ſed pectus anhelum,
Et rabie fera corda tument: majorq; videri,
Nec mortale ſonans; afflata eſt numine quando
Jam propiore Dei. ———

The Hero now the Sacred Floor approach'd,
When, on a ſudden, the Prophetick Maid,
This is the Fearful Time t' enquire of Fate!
And ſaid it with a Voice, and with a Look,
That now were hers no more.
For, raving, Lo! the God! the God! *ſhe cries,*
While half diſcloſing her diſtorted Face,
Her Treſſes in a wild Diſorder ſtare.
And now ſhe pants, ſhe ſwells, ſhe foams with Rage,
And now her Shape looks hideous to the Eye,
And now ſhe thunders in a dreadful Tone,
While all the Godhead raging in her Breaſt,
With his tempeſtuous Spirit ſhakes her Soul.

In ſhort, any Thing that immediately concerns Revelation, has ſo great an Influence upon Poetry, that it is able to change even the Nature of Writing, and exalt that very ſort of Poetry, which by its Character is Low and Humble; as for Example, The Eclogue: The Fourth Eclogue of *Virgil*, will be eaſily granted by all to be very Sublime. But what is it that makes it ſo? Why, there is at once in that Eclogue, an Invocation, and an Apoſtrophe, and a Revelation of ſundry Miracles to come. The Fifth Eclogue between *Menalcas* and *Mopſus*, begins with all the Humility, and all the Simplicity, that is proper and peculiar to the Eclogue.

Men. *Cur non, Mopſe, boni quoniam convenimus ambo,*
Tu calamos inflare leves, ego dicere verſus,
Hic corylis miſtas inter conſidimus ulmos?

And thus Mr. *Duke* has with the ſame Simplicity tranſlated it.

M. Mopſus, *Since Chance does us together bring,*
And you ſo well can pipe, and I can ſing,
Why ſit we not beneath this ſecret Shade,
By Elms and Hazels mingling Branches made?

But this very *Menalcas* changes his Tone in a wonderful Manner, when in the ſame Eclogue he comes to the Apotheoſis of *Daphnis*.

Can-

Candidus inſuetum miratur limen Olympi,
Sub pedibuſq; videt nubes, & ſidera Daphnis.

And you may eaſily ſee that the Gentleman who tranſlated it, who wants no Genius, felt the extreme Alteration of the Spirit.

Daphnis, *now wond'ring at the glorious Show,*
O'er Heaven's bright Pavement does triumphant go,
And ſees the moving Clouds, and the fixt Stars below.

But let us ſee a little how *Virgil* goes on.

Ergo alacris ſilvas, & cætera rura voluptas,
Panaque, paſtoreſque tenet, Dryadaſque puellas.
Nec lupus inſidias pecori, nec retia cervis
Ulla dolum meditantur: amat bonus otia Daphnis.

Therefore new Joys make glad the Woods, the Plains,
Pan *and the* Dryads, *and the chearful Swains,*
The Wolf no Ambuſh for the Flock does lay,
No cheating Nets the harmleſs Deer betray,
Daphnis *a general Peace commands, and Nature does obey.*

But *Virgil* goes on.

Ipſi lætitia voces ad ſidera jactant
Intonſi montes: ipſæ jam carmina rupes,
Ipſa ſonant arbuſta: Deus! Deus ille! Menalca.
Sis bonus ô fœlixque tuis! ——

Hark!

Hark! the glad Mountains raiſe to Heav'n their Voice!
Hark! the hard Rocks in myſtick Tunes rejoice!
Hark! thro' the Thickets, wondrous Songs reſound,
A God! a God! Menalcas, *he is crown'd!*
O be propitious! O be good to thine!

But now 'tis Time to ask a Queſtion, What is the Reaſon that *Virgil*, who knew the Character of the Eclogue better than any Man, and who was ſo thoroughly convinc'd, that the Diſcourſes of Shepherds ought to be ſimple, and their Affections ſoft and gentle Affections; and who, beſides, has been always us'd to introduce his Perſons ſpeaking perfectly in their Characters, ſhould bring in *Menalcas* in this Eclogue, talking in ſo exalted a Manner, and with ſo ſtrong an Enthuſiaſm? Why he has given the Reaſon in the preceding Verſes.

——— *Ipſæ jam carmina rupes,*
Ipſa ſonant arbuſta: Deus! Deus ille! Menalca.

'Tis, that he was ſatisfied, that very violent Enthuſiaſms, flow ſo neceſſarily from the Wonders of Religion, that they were as natural to Shepherds, as they were to Kings, as being to both alike unavoidable. But what Influence the miraculous Part of Religion had on the Ancient Poetry, we ſhall diſcover more at large in the following Chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

That the Grecian *Poetry flouriſh'd with their Religion.*

THE *Grecian* Religion flouriſh'd in *Greece* from the Time of *Orpheus*, who was either the Original Inſtitutor, or, at leaſt, a vehement Propagator of that Idolatry, till the Age after that in which *Sophocles* flouriſh'd, that is, for the Space of about Eight hundred Years, and in that Space of Time flouriſh'd all their Poets, who are celebrated for their Excellence in that ſort of Poetry which we call Sacred. Which alone is a ſtrong Preſumption, that theſe Poets deriv'd their Excellence from Religion. In ſhort, the Advantage which their Poetry drew from Religion, muſt needs be very conſiderable, when, for all or moſt of the forementioned Space of Time, according to the Teſtimony of *Plutarch*, and ſeveral others of their authentick Writers, it made moſt of their Zealots, even their common People, Poets, and that even in their ordinary Converſation. I muſt confeſs, the Gentleman who writ the Hiſtory of Oracles, treats this as a Fiction, and a Fiction ſo palpable, as not

not to be worth the anſwering. But, perhaps, that Gentleman had not conſider'd this Matter enough. For I deſire the Reader to conſider Two Things; Firſt, The extraordinary Incentives which thoſe People had to Enthuſiaſm, which is one Qualification for Poetry; and, Secondly, The Habit which they might very probably contract of Verſification. To be ſatisfied of the Firſt, let us inquire a little into the Nature of their Religion: And upon Inquiry we ſhall find, that the very Source, and Spring, and Soul of it was an imaginary or pretended Revelation, and that that Revelation was ſuppos'd to be conſtant and continual, as it has been of every Religion which has no ſound Morality. They had their publick and private Revelations, as Oracles, Viſions, Dreams, Apparitions: And Gods and Goddeſſes, Nymphs and Demi-gods, Fawns and Satyrs, were ſeen by Imagination in every Grove, on every Mountain, and in every Valley, as ſoon as either the Horrors of the Place, or its Silence, or their Fears, or their Wiſhes, or their Contemplations, had diſpos'd their Minds to be Religiouſly impos'd upon. Now what ſort of Paſſions, and what ſort of Spirit muſt be produc'd in them by theſe Imaginations, we may gueſs by what happens among ourſelves, when any one believes that he has ſeen an Apparition. The Man is quite alter'd in a Moment; his Colour, his Mien, his Comportment, are all different: Nor are they

they who hear him the ſame, but are all of them ſurpriz'd, tranſported, aſtoniſh'd, and all of them very profoundly attentive. Now very few that have any Judgment, have any Notion that an Apparition will do them any harm, nor has any one an Example of it, that may be eaſily credited. But the ancient *Grecians* had Notions, that their Gods had Power to deſtroy them, or make them happy, and they had a thouſand Examples of it, in *Muſeus*, and *Orpheus*, and *Homer*, and the reſt of the Fathers of their Church, which muſt cauſe the Emotions upon the fancied Apparitions, or the Relations of them, to be the greater, and fill their Souls with more turbulent Paſſions, and a greater Religious Horror.

But then, let us conſider, Secondly, That theſe Zealots muſt, in ſome meaſure, have contracted a Habit of Verſification from their Religious Duties. For the very common People in *Greece*, had, with quick Apprehenſions, a great deal of Vivacity; and, therefore, I leave the Reader to gueſs, what Effect the reading *Muſeus*, and *Homer*, and *Orpheus*, and the reſt of the Fathers of their Church, for their whole Life-time, muſt neceſſarily have had upon their Minds; together with their Praying, Praiſing, Sacrificing, and Thankſgiving in Verſe: Why may not they very well be ſuppoſed from all this, to have contracted a Habit of Verſifying?

And

And why may not that Habit, join'd to their continual Enthuſiaſtick Motions, which they had, either from the Revelations which they fancied that the Gods imparted to themſelves, or from the Relations of thoſe which they believed were vouchſafed to others; or from the Performance of the foreſaid Religious Duties, and from their Ritual, which their Poets had compos'd with ſo much Enthuſiaſm, capacitate them to expreſs themſelves Poetically, even in common Society; as well as ſome whole Sects of our Modern Fanaticks in *England*, who have by no means the Vivacity of the *Grecians*, are enabled, from the continual Reading of Scripture, and the imaginary Dictates of the private Spirit, to make up their ordinary Converſation almoſt wholly of Scripture Language?

But ſince theſe Viſions, and theſe Apparitions, join'd to their conſtant Reading the Poets, had ſuch a mighty Influence upon the People, what muſt they not have had upon their Prieſts the Poets, who having ſtronger Pretences to thoſe Revelations, and more earneſt and eager Application to the Reading of the Poets who writ before them, and who beſides, having ſtrong Imaginations, and great Paſſions, and ſtill greater Souls to command them, were qualify'd to draw an extraordinary Advantage from them? When theſe, whoſe peculiar Buſineſs it was to take care of Religion, at any Time writ upon

upon Religious Matters, what Gravity, what Severity, what Elevation, what Vehemence muſt they not neceſſarily derive from their Subject?

CHAP. XII.

Objection anſwered.

BUT here 'tis convenient to anſwer an Objection; for here it will be urg'd, That the Ancient Poets among the *Grecians*, being Men of extraordinary Parts, could not believe any Thing ſo abſurd, as the Revelations and Miracles mention'd in the former Chapter, and conſequently, could not draw any Advantage from them. To which I anſwer, That, firſt, they might draw an Advantage from them, tho' they did not believe them; and, ſecondly, That they did believe them.

Firſt, Suppoſing they did not believe them, yet they might very well draw their Advantage from them. For every one is brought up in the Reveal'd Religion of his Country, and conſequently, believes it for the firſt Part of his Life. Now every one knows, that the Force of Education, and the Influence of firſt Impreſſions, is great, and eſpecially

cially upon the Minds of thoſe who have ſtrong Imaginations. And ſuppoſing that the Poets, when they ſet themſelves to write, were not ſatisfied about the Truth of the Revelations of which they treated, yet the former ſtrong Enthuſiaſtick Motions that they were wont to have upon the like Ideas, in the firſt Years of their Youth, would certainly follow upon them again, whenever they had heartily a Mind to give into them.

But, Secondly, a Man may have a very good Underſtanding, and yet believe a falſe, nay, even an abſurd Revelation. The Revelation of *Mahomet* is both falſe and abſurd, and yet ſeveral among the *Turks*, who have ſhewn themſelves Men of extraordinary Parts for ſeveral Years together, have at laſt convinc'd the World of the Sincerity of their Belief, by very frankly ſubmitting to die at the Command of their Emperors, when they could, with a great deal of Eaſe, have declin'd it. For, 'tis ſo reaſonable to believe, that there ſhould be ſuch a Thing as Revelation, of which we ſhall ſpeak more at large anon; and all Revelations are ſo little to be comprehended by us, that a Man even of a good Underſtanding, will be oblig'd to believe an abſurd one, rather than none. Beſides, the Ancient *Grecian* Poets, knew no other Religion than the *Grecian* Revelation. For, they had neither any clear Idea, of one Supreme Independant Being,

Being, nor any tolerable Knowledge of the Law of Nature. For all the great Poets among the *Grecians*, flouriſh'd before the Doctrine of *Socrates* was eſtabliſh'd in the World, and before that Eſtabliſhment, they had neither any certain Knowledge of the True God, nor any tolerable Notion of the Law of Nature. For had there been that, there would have been a Syſtem of Morality; but *Socrates* was the firſt who introduc'd Moral Philoſophy into that Part of the World.

And here the Mythologiſts, may pretend as long as they pleaſe, that the Ancient *Grecian* Poets, by the Number of their Falſe Gods, meant only the different Notions of the True. 'Tis plain, they had no clear and diſtinct Idea, of one Supreme and Infinite Being: For, either the Knowledge of the True God muſt be drawn from Reaſon, or Revelation. From Revelation they could not draw it, becauſe their own Revelation was not true: And if they had the Knowledge of the True God from any other Revelation, of which, perhaps, ſome of them might have heard imperfectly, why then that Knowledge was imperfect, and could conſequently not be clear: And to deduce that Knowledge from Reaſon, a Man muſt uſe a great deal of Attention, and a great deal of Application. But in thoſe Times the Corruption of the *Grecians* was too great, and their Paſſions were too ſtrong, and the Exer-

ciſe of Reaſon was too little known among them, to uſe either the Attention, or the Application. But beſides all this, there is ſomething in the Ancient *Grecian* Poets, that is repugnant to the Divine Nature, as is known to every one who has been converſant with them, and that alone renders all the Conjectures of the Mythologiſts ridiculous.

And, Laſtly, we have a great deal of Reaſon to be convinc'd, that the Ancient *Grecian* Poets, I mean their Sacred Poets, did believe the Revelations they treated of, becauſe as their Poetry flouriſh'd with their Revelation, ſo at laſt, it fail'd with it, as we ſhall ſhew at large in the following Chapter.

CHAP. XIII.

That the Greater Poetry among the Grecians, *fail'd with their Religion.*

AS Epick Poetry, Tragedy, and the Greater Ode, flouriſh'd with Religion among the Ancient *Grecians*, ſo together with Religion they fail'd. Now in order to the proving this, let us inquire how, and when

when the *Grecian* Religion fail'd. We have ſaid in one of the former Chapters, that the very Spring and Soul of that Religion, was a conſtant continual Revelation, as it muſt neceſſarily have been of ſuch a Religion as had no Morality. The *Grecians* worſhipp'd many Gods, but before they worſhipp'd them, they muſt believe that they were, and that they wanted neither Power nor Will, to make them either happy or miſerable. Now of theſe two Things they were convinc'd by imaginary or pretended Revelations, as by Oracles, Viſions, Dreams, Apparitions, and a thouſand fantaſtick Miracles. Now as long as theſe were in Credit in *Greece*, Polytheiſm went on triumphantly. For, they who had neither any Inſight into the True Religion, nor any tolerable Habit of Reaſoning, could never argue againſt Matter of Fact, as long as they made no doubt of the Truth of it. But as ſoon as the Matter of Fact came to be ſuſpected, the *Grecian* Worſhip was undermin'd and weaken'd very conſiderably. To be convinc'd of this, we need only conſider the Deſign of that Revelation, and the Methods of carrying it on, and we ſhall find, that that very Deſign, and thoſe very Methods, made a certain Way for its Ruin. We have ſaid above, that no Religion that wants Morality, can out-laſt its Revelation: For if Morality is not for it, it will be againſt it: And 'tis impoſſible to conceive, how any Religion can

be permanent, which has neither Miracles nor Human Reaſon to ſupport it. Now it will be an eaſy Matter to ſhew Two Things, Firſt, That the *Grecian* Religion was without Morality; and, Secondly, That the very Deſign of it, and the Methods of carrying on that Deſign, introduc'd Moral Philoſophy, by a very natural Preparation.

The Deſign of the *Grecian* Religion, ſeems to me to be the providing for the Happineſs of Mankind in this Life, by drawing them out of a State of War, and making 'em live peaceably and ſecurely among one another.

Silveſtres homines ſacer interpreſque Deorum
Cædibus, & victu fœdo deterruit Orpheus,

Says *Horace*, in his little Treatiſe *De Arte Poetica*. That is:

Orpheus, *the Sacred Interpreter of the Gods, deterr'd ſavage Men from murdering one another, and reclaim'd them from the barbarous brutal Lives which they led.*

Now this Deſign he was to bring about by Religion, and revealing the pretended Will of the Gods. In order to which, it was neceſſary to give the People ſuch a Religion, as might be agreeable to them in the Condition in which they were. For otherwiſe they would not have hearken'd to it. Now, to give them a Religion that might be

be agreeable to them, it was neceſſary to give them ſuch a one as might maintain and indulge their Paſſions. For, when the *Grecian* Worſhip was firſt inſtituted, the Corruption of that People was ſo very great, that tho' the Inſtitutor had known the pure Law of Nature, he durſt never have preach'd it to them, becauſe their Paſſions were then too ſtrong to receive it. Well, then, *Orpheus*, or *Linus*, or whoever was the firſt Inſtitutor of the *Grecian* Religion, was oblig'd to maintain and indulge the Paſſions, which I am apt to believe, that he had no Notion of ſuppreſſing, becauſe he believ'd them all to be Natural, and ſaw by Experience, that ſome of them contributed to the Pleaſure and Happineſs of Mankind. The Inſtitutor then of the *Grecian* Worſhip, was oblig'd to maintain the Paſſions: But here lay the Difficulty; The very Crimes that kept Men aſunder, and in a State of War, were caus'd by ſome of thoſe very Paſſions: What then was to be done in this Caſe? Why, he was oblig'd to give thoſe Paſſions a Diverſion, and to indulge and maintain the reſt in the ſame Condition in which he found them. As for Example, Rage and Fury were the principal Paſſions that maintain'd Men in a State of War, and occaſion'd the frequent Murders that were daily committed among them. Now theſe Paſſions being grown up with them, and by conſequence become habitual to them, it would have been very difficult,

i
i not impoſſible, to ſuppreſs them. The firſt
nſtitutor then of the *Grecian* Religion,
hought fit to give thoſe Paſſions a Vent a
eſs cruel Way, and for that purpoſe, in all
ikelihood, inſtituted the *Orgies* of *Bacchus*. But the Paſſions that were not utterly inconſiſtent with Society, he indulg'd in the Condition in which he found them, as the Love of Women, Wine, *&c.* For, all that the Founder of that Religion could pretend to at firſt, was to bring Men out of a greater Confuſion, into a leſs, and not to reduce them to perfect Order. Therefore, by ſhewing the Gods addicted to theſe Paſſions, he encourag'd the People to cheriſh them, nay, to ſuch an Intemperance, as was repugnant to the Original Law of Nature, nay, even to ſuch a Criminal Degree, as was afterwards forbidden by the Laws of the *Grecian* States. For Intemperance in the Uſe of Wine, and of Women, is contrary to the Dictates of Nature's Original Law, and yet was encourag'd by the Examples of ſome of their Gods; and Rapes, and Adulteries, and Inceſt, were encourag'd by the ſame Examples at firſt, without any manner of Countercheck. For, either the Syſtem of the *Grecian* Theology was contriv'd at firſt, without any Infernal Puniſhments, or they were only threatned to ſuch Crimes, as were contradictory of Civil Society. But afterwards, as Confuſion leſſen'd, and Order increas'd, and other Crimes were found to be more

more repugnant to Community, and ſo were forbidden by the Laws, the Magiſtrates, in all likelihood, oblig'd the ſucceeding Poets, to threaten thoſe who dar'd to commit them, with the Puniſhments of another World, and ſo to make up the the Infernal Scheme by Degrees. Thus have I endeavour'd to ſhew, by the moſt probable Conjectures I could make, what was the Original Deſign of *Orpheus*, and what Method he took to compaſs it. But this is paſt all doubt, That the Original Revelation of the *Grecian* Worſhip, was repugnant, in ſeveral Points, to the Primitive Law of Nature, and the ſucceeding Laws of the *Grecian* States. Now the Method which *Orpheus*, or whoever was the firſt Founder of the *Grecian* Religion, had taken, was maintain'd by ſucceeding Poets; only here and there, as Occaſion ſerv'd, they intermingled Precepts of Juſtice and Temperance; which Precepts are by no means to be look'd upon as Parts of that Revelation, but as Remnants of Natural Religion, and of the Law of Nature, which the Paſſions had not been able totally to ſuppreſs; or the Efforts and Strugglings of Reaſon, recovering from its Lethargy by Degrees. But the Poets and Lawgivers could not give good Precepts, with a great deal of good Succeſs, as long as the Gods were believ'd to give ill Examples. For the People look'd upon their Laws, unleſs they were inforc'd by Religion, as made only for the Conveniency of Life,

and tranſgreſs'd them whenever they could with Impunity; and the Precepts ſcatter'd up and down in the Poems, were but impotent, imperfect Efforts of Reaſon, and utterly unable to prevail againſt a continual conſtant Revelation, and a Train of perpetual Miracles.

But now let us conſider how this Deſign of *Orpheus*, or whoever was the firſt Inſtitutor of the *Grecian* Religion: let us ſee how his Deſign in ſetting up his Theology, together with the Methods that were us'd for carrying it on by him and ſucceeding Poets, ſecretly prepar'd the Way for its utter Ruin. For the bringing Men in a Body together, and cauſing them more frequently to converſe with one another, was the firſt Occaſion of the cultivating Human Reaſon, and was conſequently one Preparation to the Introduction of Moral Philoſophy.

And the Laws that were made by their Legiſlators, and the Precepts that were given by their Prieſts and Poets, in conſequence of Mens convening and converſing together, had been ſenſible Incroachments upon the Revelation, as being manifeſt Contradictions of it, if Men had been us'd to reflect. At laſt, after Miracles and Revelations had prevailed for the Space of almoſt Eight hundred Years, *Socrates* aroſe, a moſt extraordinary Man, who finding that the Precepts that had been ſcattered here and there, for the Regulation of Human Life, and the Laws

that

that had been given for the maintaining of Order in Communities, were all contradictory of the Revelation, but all agreeing perfectly with one another in the promoting of the ſame Deſign, which was the Welfare of thoſe who obſerv'd them, he had Reaſon to inquire a little more narrowly into the Revelation, and to find that that was contradictory too of itſelf. For the Cœleſtial and the Infernal Schemes of the Ancient *Grecian* Theology, ſeem'd ſo utterly inconſiſtent, that, as I hinted before, they could never be conceiv'd to be both given out at a Time; but it was reaſonable to believe, that firſt the Cœleſtial Scheme was invented, and afterwards the Infernal made up by degrees, in order to the ſerving the Ends of Government. For, not only the Infernal Deities rigorouſly puniſh'd thoſe very Crimes, which the Cœleſtial Gods, had, by their Examples, encourag'd Men to commit; but, which is very odd to conſider, their Hell ſeem'd to be fill'd with their good Gods, and their Heaven with Devils. For, whether we conſider *Pluto*, or *Proſerpine*, or the Judges, or the Fates, or the Furies, theſe were all of them very rigorous, and, if you pleaſe, inexorable; but then they were all of them very juſt, and Foes, and inexorable only to Guilt, and never any of them did any harm to Virtue. But, at the ſame Time that the Magiſtracy of Hell was compos'd of theſe honeſt upright Perſons, Heaven, on the other ſide,

was

was fill'd with all ſorts of Scoundrels, Rakes, Cuckolds, Bullies, Pimps and Bawds, and Cuckold-makers; and no Virtue, and no Innocence could ſecure either Men or Women, from theſe Immortal Scowrers. Nay, Men often ſuffer'd for their Temperance, and Women for their Chaſtity. *Socrates*, then, conſidering the Abſurdity of the Revelation, and the Reaſonableneſs of the Laws and Precepts that were diſtinct from it; the Agreement of the latter among themſelves, and the Inconſiſtency of the former; cultivated the one, and contemn'd the other, and, by the Force of a ſtrong and clear Reaſon, and a long Converſation with all ſorts of People, brought the Exerciſe and Habit of Reaſoning into Requeſt, and, by little and little, introduced a Syſtem of Morality, reſtor'd, in ſome meaſure, Natural Religion, and recover'd the Law of Nature. Thus *Socrates* gave the World a Syſtem of Morality, and tho' his Contemporaries had not Reaſon enough to make the Diſcovery themſelves, yet they had Senſe enough to approve of it when it was made, and to be convinc'd of the Truth of it, and conſequently, to be ſatisfy'd that the Revelation was falſe. For ſeeing that Virtue and Order, and Happineſs, I mean in ſome degree, ſprung from Philoſophy, and Vice and Confuſion, and Miſery, from the Revelation; and ſeeing the Philoſophy was eſtabliſh'd by Inferences, which very naturally flow'd from thoſe intelligent

telligent Faculties, which, whatever Power had form'd Man, had given him to be his Guide; and ſeeing the Philoſophy, and the Revelation contradictory one of another; they could not find in their Hearts, to believe that the Gods could be ſo unjuſt as to deſign the Miſery and Confuſion of Mankind, or ſo abſurd, as to give them two Rules to walk by, that were contradictory one of another.

The Eſtabliſhment then of Moral Philoſophy, was the Ruin of the old Revelation, and ſo made way for a new. For after the Death of *Socrates*, there ſtarted up ſeveral Sects of Philoſophers, as the *Cyrenaicks*, *Cynicks*, *Peripateticks*, *Epicureans*, *Scepticks*, ſome of them immediately, but all within a Hundred and fifty Years; who were all of them mortal Enemies, not only to the *Grecian* Revelation, but to Reveal'd Religion in general: Tho' in the laſt, they certainly went beyond the Deſign of their common Maſter *Socrates*, whoſe Intention was to reform Revelation, and not to ruin it. And thus upon the Eſtabliſhment of Moral Philoſophy, the Credit of Oracles was diminiſh'd conſiderably, and Apparitions, Viſions, *&c.* were contemn'd and exploded, and with them, down went the greater Poetry; for you will find upon Inquiry, that there was no Poet among the *Grecians*, who was born after the Death of *Socrates*, who writ with a great Spirit.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

That the Greater Poetry among the Romans, *flouriſh'd and fail'd with their Religion.*

THAT the *Grecians* deriv'd their Pre-eminence in the greater Poetry from Religion, may appear, not only becauſe they flouriſh'd and decay'd together, but becauſe the *Romans*, whoſe Country was not, like *Greece*, the Scene of perpetual Miracles, and who for a long time had no Correſpondence with *Greece*, had no ſuch thing as the Spirit of Poetry among them, till they came to conquer that Country.

Græcia capta ferum victorem cæpit & artes,
Inſulit Agreſti Latio. ——

For there was ſomething in the Inſtitution of the *Roman* Religion, as it was eſtabliſh'd by *Numa Pompilius*, that leſſen'd the Credit of Divine Apparitions conſiderably. 'Tis true, *Numa* founded his Sacred Eſtabliſhment upon the Authority of Apparitions; but, at the ſame Time that he profeſt a Familiarity

Familiarity with the Goddeſs * *Ægeria*, and with the Muſes, he taught the People, that no Reſemblance of the Gods could be made, nor any Likeneſs to repreſent them. The firſt was a Fiction to ſerve a Turn in Politicks, and the latter a Truth that was contradictory of the other. And he had need have very groſs People to deal with, that could ſwallow ſuch a Contradiction as that: For if no Form or Likeneſs of the Gods could be made, in what Likeneſs could they appear to him? or how could he diſtinguiſh *Ægeria* from the Muſes, or the Muſes from one another? I am apt to believe, that *Numa* ventur'd this Contradiction upon the Groſsneſs of the People with whom he had to deal, becauſe the Truth and Fiction were equally neceſſary to his Eccleſiaſtical Policy. For as his Authority was grounded upon the Fiction, ſo it was ſtrengthen'd by the Truth; for the appearing of the Immortal Powers to *Numa*, had not made him ſo venerable, if ſuch Apparitions had been common to every one. However, this Contradiction was ſwallowed by the People, and *Numa* upon it, gain'd both his Points; for he was held to be a Sacred Perſon, and the Gods were eſteem'd inviſible. So that for a Hundred and ſixty Years, ſays *Plutarch*, in the Life of *Numa*, there was no ſuch Thing as a Statue

* *Plutarch*'s Life of *Numa*.

in

in their Temples, nor any Talk of the Gods appearing to them. For how could thoſe numerous Gods whom they worſhipp'd, with any Poſſibility appear to them, ſince they could make no Likeneſs of them? At length, the Superſtition of the *Grecian* Idolatry by degrees increas'd upon them; and having conquer'd *Greece* and *Carthage*, and ſo got an Inſight into the Arts, and Leiſure at once to cultivate them, the *Grecian* Religion, and the *Grecian* Arts grew up together among them; and of all the Arts, Poetry was the firſt that was cultivated, becauſe it was incorporated with their Religion. So that there appears to me to be this conſiderable Difference between the greater Poetry of the *Grecians*, and that which was among the *Romans*, That the *Grecians* deriv'd their Poetick Enthuſiaſm from the Miracles of their Religion, and the *Romans* borrow'd theirs in ſome meaſure from the *Grecians*.

Spiritum Graiæ tenuem Camœnæ
Parca non mendax dedit, &c.
Hor. lib. 2. Ode 16.

So that the latter appears to me, to be but a Copy, as it were, of the former. For, in Effect, the *Romans* copied the *Grecian* Spirit: For we have ſhewn from *Horace*, the beſt of the *Roman* Criticks, that the *Romans* had no ſuch thing among them, till they had conquer'd *Greece*, nor had any ſuch frequent

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Impulſes to Enthuſiaſm; and having the ſame Revelation at the Time that they cultivated Poetry, that the *Grecians* had, they could hardly ſay any thing of their Gods, or their Demi-Gods, or their fabulous Transformations, that the *Grecian* Poets had not ſaid before them. Beſides, the moſt famous of the *Roman* Poets, copied particular *Grecian* Authors, as *Horace* did *Pindar*, and conſequently, fell ſhort of them in the Freeneſs and Flame of their Spirit, as Copies muſt neceſſarily do of Originals. And as for the Tragedies that were among the *Romans*, the beſt of them were directly tranſlated from the *Athenian* Poets.

Since then the *Roman* Poets copied the *Grecian* Spirit, what is the Reaſon that the *Romans* copied them ſo much better than we do? Why, Firſt, they underſtood them better, and were more familiar with them, becauſe then the *Grecian* was a living Language, and *Rome* had a continual Correſpondence with *Athens*. Secondly, they had a more beautiful and more harmonious Language to receive that Spirit; and, Laſtly, and chiefly, that Religion from which it was deriv'd, made greater Impreſſions upon them, than it does upon us. And in order to the making that appear, we ſhall ſhew, That Poetry among the *Romans*, flouriſh'd and fail'd with Religion.

Poetry

Poetry began to be cultivated at *Rome*, after the Conqueſt of *Greece*, and the End of the Third *Punick* War.

Serus enim Græcis admovit acumina chartis
Et poſt Punica belli quietus, quærere cepit
Quid Sophocles, & Theſpis, & Æſchylus, utile ferrent.

Now nothing is more reaſonable than to believe, that the *Grecian* Superſtition, from which the Spirit of their Poetry was deriv'd, was at a greater Height at *Rome*, after the *Romans* had conquer'd the *Grecians*, than it could be before they had a continual Correſpondence with that People. But beſides, Religion in the main, may be thought to be in a very great Eſteem among the *Romans* about the Time that they began to cultivate Poetry.

In order to the proving which, let us inquire, What was the Fountain and Source of Religion among the *Romans*, and upon what it chiefly depended? The chief Support of Religion among the *Grecians*, was the conſtant Revelation by Oracles; but the *Italian* Oracles were more rare, and of much leſs Renown. The Prop and Support of the *Roman* Superſtition lay in their Divinations, as *Machiavel* in his Diſcourſes obſerves. For, ſays *Machiavel*, they eaſily believ'd that that Divinity that foretold their Felicity, had the Power to effect it.

Machiavel

Machiavel had Reaſon to be of that Opinion. For, how could their Gods be thought certainly to foretell, what it was not in their Power certainly to effect? And thus did the *Roman* Worſhip depend, in a very peculiar manner, upon the Credit of the Divinations. But now let us inquire, in what Credit the Divinations were when Poetry began to be cultivated; which, as we obſerv'd above, was after the Third *Punick* War.

Now the Credit of the Augurs, and the Aruſpices, muſt needs at that Time be very great with the *Romans*. For, ſince good Fortune alone, inclines Men to Devotion, and to confide in the Gods, as *Ariſtotle* has obſerv'd in his Second Book of his *Rhetorick*; what Thoughts muſt not the *Romans* have of their Soothſaying, when they were not only arriv'd at ſuch a Degree of Felicity, but believ'd that they ow'd all their Greatneſs, to the Prediction of their Augurs? For they conſulted them upon every important Conjuncture, and particularly before they gave Battel. 'Tis true, they had ſometimes fail'd, but where they had fail'd once, they had ſucceeded Ten Times; which is evident from the Felicity of that Commonwealth. Now, if One lucky Gueſs can ſupport our ordinary Fortune-tellers, who are wretched contemptible Vagabonds, againſt a Hundred that happen unfortunate, as we know by Experience it does, in what Height of Repu-

tation muſt not the Soothſayers be, whoſe Order itſelf was held to be Sacred and Auguſt, when they had apparently ſucceeded Ten Times for their failing Once? The *Romans* were now become the greateſt People upon the Earth, and the Promiſe of *Romulus* reveal'd to *Proculus*, according to the Oath of the latter, That *Rome* ſhould be the Miſtreſs of Nations; that Promiſe, which at firſt ſeem'd ſo very incredible, was now very likely to be accompliſh'd. And the *Romans* believ'd, that they had been conducted by the Predictions of thoſe Diviners, as it were, by ſo many Steps, to that Height of Glory, at which they were in Triumph arriv'd, and from the which they had a certain Proſpect of becoming Maſters of the Univerſe.

Divination then, being in very great Credit, in the Age in which Poetry began to be cultivated, Religion, which had its chief Dependance upon it, muſt conſequently needs be in very great Credit too, which was the Thing that we deſign'd to prove.

But from what has been ſaid, it neceſſarily follows, that any one that ſhould have brought Divination into Diſgrace, muſt have given a terrible Shock to the Superſtition of the *Romans*. Now, about a Hundred and threeſcore Years after Poetry began to be cultivated, being introduc'd by *Livius Andronicus*, there flouriſh'd a great Wit, who not only baffled the whole Myſtery of Divination,

nation, in a learned Philoſophical Treatiſe, but alſo publiſh'd an extraordinary Book, concerning the Nature of the Gods, which alone, ſays Mr. *Harrington*, in his Preliminaries to his *Oceana*, was ſufficient to overthrow the Religion of the *Roman* State. Thus *Cicero* contriv'd and effected himſelf the very Crime, for which he declaim'd againſt *Catiline*, with ſo much Vehemence, and undermin'd the moſt ſolid Foundations of the Temples of the *Roman* Gods.

About the ſame Time, the *Athenian* Philoſophers began to eſtabliſh themſelves at *Rome*. The *Jews*, whoſe Country *Pompey* had ſubdu'd, began every Day to reſort more and more to the World's Capital. The *Romans*, thro' an Exceſs of ridiculous Flattery, deify'd their deceas'd Emperors, which alone, was enough to make the *Roman* Religion ridiculous; and *Jeſus Chriſt* came into the World, to introduce a new Revelation. What was the Effect of all this upon the *Roman* Religion? A Superſtition that had made ſuch Impreſſions upon the Minds of that People, and from which they imagin'd, that they and their Anceſtors had receiv'd ſo much Benefit, could not be utterly overthrown in a Moment. The *Romans* were ſo very pertinacious in their Principles, and had ſo much Flegm and Conſtancy in their Conſtitutions, that the *Grecian* Philoſophy, and the Doctrine of *Cicero*, requir'd ſome Time to prevail. However,

vail they did; and with them the Chriſtian Religion got ground, and the Pagan declin'd; and the Superſtition and Poetry of the *Romans* gradually declin'd together. And the Declenſion of the *Roman* Poetry was attributed, even by *Petronius* himſelf, who was a thorough-pac'd *Epicurean*, to the Neglect of the old Theology.

Per ambages Deorumque miniſteria
Precipitandus eſt liber ſpiritus.

CHAP. XV.

Objections anſwer'd. Concluſion of the former Part of the Work.

BUT here it concerns us to anſwer ſome Objections, which we eaſily foreſee may be made. For if the Religion which the *Romans* borrow'd from the *Greeks*, had ſo great an Influence on their Poetry, and the Two Treatiſes which *Cicero* writ concerning Divination, and the Nature of the Gods, gave ſuch a Shock to that Superſtition; how comes it to paſs, that Poetry not only flouriſh'd afterwards, but came to Perfection in *Horace* and *Virgil*, which Two were the Greateſt of the *Roman* Poets? In Anſwer

Anſwer to which, we ſhall endeavour to ſhew, as ſuccinctly as we can, why Poetry flouriſh'd after the Publication of thoſe Treatiſes, and why it afterwards came to Perfection. To ſatisfy the Reader, why Poetry flouriſh'd afterwards, we need only repeat what we obſerv'd above, that the Flegm and Solidity of the *Roman* People, and, perhaps, their Politicks, ſuſpended the Effect of thoſe Writings, and of the Doctrine of the *Grecian* Philoſophers; and when they began to ſpread, it is reaſonable to believe, that they went downwards from the *Patricians* and the *Roman* Knights to the People, who, in all Probability, were the laſt who were undeceived. Now the Greateſt of their Poets, and eſpecially *Virgil* and *Horace*, flouriſh'd within leſs than Fifty Years after the Publication of thoſe Treatiſes, and were moſt of them very meanly deſcended. So that they were brought up in the Religion of their Country, and had conſequently, when they came to write, the Advantage of firſt Impreſſions, and their copying the *Grecian* Poetry, threw them upon the old Ideas. 'Tis true, ſome few of them were better deſcended, and were *Roman* Knights, but either they were too much Men of Pleaſure, to dive into Philoſophy, or too much Poets, to eſpouſe a Sect that would not favour Enthuſiaſm.

But now let us inquire, with the ſame Brevity, for what Reaſon Poetry, that derives its Pre-eminence from Religion, came to Perfection among the *Romans*, after theſe Attacks had been given to the Religion of that State: In Anſwer to which, we muſt put the Reader in Mind, that there are Three Things which contribute to the Perfection of Poetry. The Firſt is Nature, which is the Foundation and Baſis of all. For Nature is the ſame Thing with Genius, and Genius and Paſſion are all one. For Paſſion in a Poem, is Genius and the Power of exciting Paſſion, is Genius in a Poet; to the raiſing of which, Religion, as we have ſhewn above, gives a very great Advantage. The Second Thing is Art, by which I mean, thoſe Rules, and that Method, which capacitate us to manage every thing with the utmoſt Dexterity, that may contribute to the Raiſing of Paſſion. The Third Thing is, The Inſtrument by which the Poet makes his Imitation, or the Language in which he writes. By Language, I do not mean here, the Expreſſion of any particular Poem, or the Poetical Dialect which the Poet models himſelf; but the Language of the Country in which he writes, and which he finds made to his Hands. Theſe are the Three Things that contribute to the Perfection of Poetry; ſo that in any Age or Country, at whatever Juncture Religion and Language, and Poetical Art, are in greateſt Force together,

ther, at that very Juncture the Poetry of that Country is at its Heighth. And this is the Reaſon why Tragedy, which is a Poem of the Growth of *Attica*, was at its Heighth in the Time of *Sophocles*, becauſe then the Language was in Perfection; the Art of Poetry, and particularly of Tragedy, had been extremely cultivated, and Religion as yet had Power enough o'er the Minds of Men to inforce the Paſſions. But the greateſt of theſe Three is Religion, and the moſt prevalent towards the Advancement of Poetry, as is plainly ſeen by the Event. For, after that the Introduction of Moral Philoſophy, had ruin'd the eſtabliſh'd Religion among the *Grecians*, Tragedy immediately loſt its Force, tho' the Language remain'd in Perfection afterwards, and the Poetick Art was perhaps improv'd. Let us now examine how the Art of Poetry, and the *Roman* Language, and the *Roman* Religion ſtood in the Time of *Auguſtus*. The Art of Poetry, which had been introduc'd by *Livius Andronicus*, had now been cultivated for about Two hundred Years, but with a great deal of Interruption, caus'd by the Violences of thoſe Times; and that it was at its utmoſt Heighth in the Time of *Auguſtus*, we have no great Reaſon to doubt, becauſe we find more of the Poetical Art in the ſingle *Æneis* of *Virgil*, than in all the reſt of the *Roman* Poets together. For the Language, that it was then at its Heighth, is agreed on by moſt; and tho' ſome few may

contend, that it was ſomewhat declin'd from the Purity which it had in the preceding Age, yet it was certainly more Poetical in the Time of *Auguſtus*, that is, more full, more ſounding, more ſignificant, and more harmonious. And as for Religion, we have already ſhewn, that the Effect of the Writings of *Cicero*, was ſuſpended by the flegmatick Temper which was incapable of ſudden Impreſſions, and, perhaps, by the Politicks of the *Romans*. But that was not all: Religion had then more Force, more Authority, and more Majeſty, than it had had for ſome Time before; and that by the Example of the Emperor. No one can be ignorant, what Influence the Example of a Prince has upon the Minds of the People. Now *Auguſtus* was, in his Temper, Religious even to Superſtition. And tho', during the Violences of the Triumvirate, his Politicks had got the better of Nature in him, yet aſſoon as he had attain'd the Sovereign Power, Policy and Nature were reconcil'd, and both of them favour'd Religion; whereas the Age preceding, had been an Age of continual Violences, and conſequently, not of ſo much Religion. The *Roman* Senate, having got the Lands from the People, had conſequently got the Dominion, ſo that that famous Commonwealth was dwindled into an Oligarchy, and that Oligarchy was grown factious, as all Oligarchies muſt of neceſſity do; and the Heads of thoſe Factions were all

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of them labouring who ſhould overthrow the State; ſo that they who were at the Helm of the State, neither were, nor could appear good, becauſe there was a Neceſſity of their giving pernicious Examples. *Auguſtus* himſelf, notwithſtanding his natural Clemency, and his Proneneſs to Superſtition, was drawn in by Ambition, to the committing all manner of Violences in the Beginning of the Triumvirate, and neither did, nor durſt appear what he was, till dividing the World between himſelf and *Anthony*, Policy and Nature were reconcil'd in him, and he was oblig'd to appear rather more Debonaire and Religious, than he was by his Natural Temper, that the Extravagancies of *Anthony* appearing more hideous, compar'd with the Beauty of his Character, he might inſenſibly undermine his Rival in the Eſteem of the Senate, and the *Roman* People, and alone command the Univerſe; and we may judge by this, what Influence the Example of the Emperor had upon the Writers, that it not only prevail'd upon *Virgil*, to make Piety one of the chief Ingredients in the Character of his Hero, who was deſign'd by the Poet, the very Picture of *Auguſtus Cæſar*, but engag'd him to incorporate ſo much Religion with the Action of his Poem, that it is the moſt Religious Epick Poem that ever was writ in the World.

And

And thus we have endeavour'd to ſhew as briefly as we could, that Art, and Language, and Religion, were all of them in a great deal of Force together, in the glorious Reign of *Auguſtus*, and much more powerfully united than ever they had been before, and I hope I need not tell the Reader, than ever they were in the Reign of ſucceeding Emperors. And in ſhewing that, I have given the Reaſons why the *Roman* Poetry was then at its utmoſt Heighth, tho' I make no doubt, but that a ſettled Calm, and a full Tranquillity, after a fierce and a tedious Tempeſt; and the Elevation that might ſpring from the Remains and the Appearances of Liberty, and conſequently, the Appearances of their being Maſters of the Univerſe; and laſtly, the never-to-be-forgotten Bounty of a magnanimous Prince, and the Emulation that muſt enſue upon it, among ſo many extraordinary Men, might all of them contribute to the Advancement of Poetry.

But if the Writings that flouriſh'd among the *Romans*, and eſpecially in the Time of *Auguſtus*, receiv'd ſuch Advantage from the *Roman* Religion, that the Excellence and Greatneſs of their Poetry is chiefly owing to that, how comes it that *Virgil* is found in his Writings to have had ſo exalted a Notion of God, as is utterly inconſiſtent with the *Grecian* Theology? How comes it to paſs, that *Lucretius* and *Horace*, are held to be thorough-

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pac'd *Epicureans*, on whom the Superſtition that reign'd among their Country-men, could have no manner of Influence, and yet *Horace* allow'd to be, after *Virgil*, the greateſt of the *Roman* Poets, and *Lucretius*, as *Taſſo* is pleas'd to call him, a moſt noble Verſifier.

'Tis true indeed, *Virgil* had an exalted Notion of God, as we may ſee by ſeveral Places in his Works:

Ab Jove principium Muſæ, Jovis omnia plena.

And that famous Paſſage in the Fourth *Georgick*;

———*Deum namque ire per omnes*
Terraſq; tractuſq; maris, cælumq; profundum.

And that in the Sixth *Æneid.*

Principio cælum, ac terras, camposq; liquentes,
Lucentemque globum Lunæ, Titaniaque aſtra,
Spiritus intus alit: totamque infuſa per artus
Mens agitat molem, & magno ſe corpore miſcet.

Now this exalted Notion of *Jupiter*, or the Supreme Being, *Virgil* had from the Writings of *Plato*; and the reſt of the Gods and Goddeſſes, a little modified, as they are in that Poet, in whom we ſee none of *Homer*'s Religious Extravagancies, are exactly the *Platonick* Dæmons. So that *Virgil* ſtrictly adhering to the *Platonick* Sect, it follows, that his

his Philoſophy did very little harm to his Religion.

But to proceed to *Horace*. He was ſo very far from being a thorough-pac'd *Epicurean*, as ſome will obſtinately have him, that he was of every Sect by Turns, and chang'd his Philoſophy and his Religion with his Humour, as a great many do beſides him; and when that Humour inclin'd him to Libertiniſm, then he was an *Epicurean*; and whenever it turn'd about to Auſterity, then he became a *Stoick*. That there are a great many ſuch Perſons in the World, we may take the Word of the Duke *de la Rochefoucaut*.

Nous ne nous apercevons que des emportmens et des mouvmens extraordinares de nos humeurs, et de notre Temperament: comme de la violence de la colere, mais perſonne quaſi, ne s' apercoit, que ces humeurs ont un cours ordinaire et regle qui ment et tourne doucement et imperceptiblement notre volonte a des actions differentes: elles roulent enſemble s'il faut ainſi dire, et exercent ſucceſſivement un empire ſecret en nous memes, de ſorts qu'elles ont un part conſiderable en toutes nos actions, ſans que nous le puiſſions reconnoitre. That is,

We are ſenſible of nothing that paſſes within us, but the extravagant extraordinary Motions of our Complexions and Humours. But hardly a Man has made this Diſcovery, that thoſe Humours have a conſtant regular Courſe, which moves

moves and inſenſibly inclines our Wills to a great many different Actions. They run rowling together, if I may uſe the Expreſſion, and exerciſe a ſecret Sway within us, ſo that they have a conſiderable Share in our Actions, while we are utterly unable to diſcern it.

Now that *Horace* was as likely to be byaſs'd by his Humour, as any other Perſon whatſoever, we have his own Word. *Epiſt.* 8. *lib.* 1.

Si quæret, quid agam; dic multa, & pulchra minantem,
Vivere nec rectè, nec ſuaviter: Haud quia grando
Contuderit vites, oleamque momorderit æſtus:
Nec quia longinquis armentum ægrotet in arvis:
Sed quia mente minùs validus, quam corpore toto,
Nil audire velim, nil diſcere, quod levet ægrum:
Fidis offendar medicis, iraſcar amicis,
Cur me funeſto properent arcere veterno.
Quæ nocuere ſequar; fugiam quæ profore credam:
Romæ Tybur amem ventoſus, Tibure Romam.

So that, as we obſerv'd above, when this Humour inclin'd him to Libertiniſm, then he was an *Epicurean*, and when the Alteration of that Humour inclin'd him to Severity, than he became a *Stoick* or a *Platonick*; of which we have a notorious Inſtance, in the 34th Ode of the Firſt Book.

Parcus Deorum cultor, & infrequens, &c.

'Tis

'Tis true, Monſieur *Dacier* treats this as Raillery, but it muſt be fine Raillery, that could never be found out to be Raillery, till above Sixteen hundred Years after it was writ. *Horace* has left enough behind him, to ſhew that he underſtood Raillery a great deal better than that comes to. But what will he ſay then, to that remarkable Paſſage of the Firſt Epiſtle of the Firſt Book.

Ac ne fortè roges, quo me duce, quo lare tuter:
Nullius addictus jurare in verba magiſtri,
Quo me cunque rapit tempeſtas, deferor hoſpes:
Nunc agilis fio, & merſor civilibus undis,
Virtutis verè cuſtos, rigidúſque ſatelles:
Nunc in Ariſtippi furtim præcepta relabor.

But tho' we ſhould grant, that *Horace* was always an *Epicurean*, yet that would make rather for, than againſt us. For it is certain, that he was educated in the Religion of his Country, as we obſerv'd above, and we know that the Force of firſt Impreſſions is great, and the Copying the Spirit of the *Grecian* Poetry threw him upon thoſe firſt Ideas.

Spiritum Graiæ tenuem Camenæ,
Parca non mendax dedit.

And then this very *Horace*, whom ſome of the Moderns will ſo obſtinately maintain to be a conſtant *Epicurean*; this very Perſon, who,

who, as he was the Second of the *Roman* Poets, was one of their greateſt Criticks, declares himſelf abſolutely of our Opinion, *viz.* that the *Roman* Poetry deriv'd its Preeminence from the *Roman* Religion; for in his Satires, wherein he aſſures us he is no Poet, he intermingles none but Burleſque Religion, and that very rarely, with his Verſes; in his Odes, where he knew that he was a Poet, Religion is every where ſeen, and Invocations, Apoſtrophes, Machines, and Revelations abound in them.

But now a Word or two to *Lucretius*. He writ before the Publication of *Cicero*'s Treatiſes, but then he was undeniably an *Epicurean*, and writ with a Deſign to draw others over to his Sect. But in that very Poem, which he writ with a Deſign to overthrow Religion, he ſhews of what Importance Religion was to Poetry; and the very Treatiſe, which he begins with a Deſign to overturn the Worſhip of the Gods, that very Treatiſe he begins with the Invocation of a Goddeſs. And that Invocation is, undeniably, one of the nobleſt and moſt Poetical Parts of his Book: So that *Lucretius*, to attain an Excellence in Poetry, was contented to be guilty of a very ſtrange Abſurdity in Philoſophy. For, to what Purpoſe does he invoke the Goddeſs of Love? Why he invokes her to inform him that he ought not to invoke her, for that ſhe does not hear him,

him, and does not regard him, and has nothing at all to do with him.

Omnis enim Divum per ſe natura neceſſe eſt
Immortali ævo ſumma cum pace fruatur,
Semota à noſtris rebus ſejuntaque longe.

For, let no one tell me here, that by *Venus*, the Poet means only the Generative Faculty of things. In ſhort, *Lucretius* invokes ſomething, and Invocation is Adoration, and whatever is ador'd, muſt, during the Action, by the Adorer, be eſteem'd a Deity.

But it is not only in his Invocation, that *Lucretius* is pleas'd to have Recourſe to Religion: For after that in the Two Firſt Books, he has been taking a great deal of pains to deſtroy the Belief of Gods and Providence, that in his Third he may be very Poetical, and very Sublime, he is forc'd to erect a new Divinity in the Room of thoſe whom he has been juſt ſubverting, and that is Nature; tho' by what he makes her ſay, in that noble *Proſopopœia*, we might very well miſtake her for Providence.

So that we have not only the Opinion of *Lucretius* on our ſide, but the Example too. For, by having Recourſe to Religion, in that very Philoſophy that utterly diſclaims it, he not only declares of what Importance he thinks it to be to Poetry, but has ſhewn of what Importance it really is, by ſucceeding ſo much better in thoſe Paſſages, than in the other

other Parts of his Book. But how could a Materialiſt, the Reader may ſay, draw any Advantage from Religion? But *Lucretius* was made, not born a Materialiſt. He was bred in the Religion of his Country, and ſo had the Advantage of firſt Impreſſions, which are never to be defac'd. *Lucretius*, you may ſay, perhaps, was very Lofty, and very Poetical, where he had nothing to do with Religion. Indeed, ſometimes he was ſo, for I do not remember, that I affirmed, that there can be no Poetry without Religion, but only, that Religion gives Occaſion for the beſt, the greateſt, and the moſt exalted, and it makes for my purpoſe ſufficiently, that *Lucretius* is moſt Poetical and Sublime, where he is Religious. But where he is Lofty in other Places, we find him deſcribing the great *Phænomena* of Nature, and the higher a Man riſes, and the nearer he comes to the firſt infinite Cauſe, the nearer he certainly comes to Religion. Beſides, where *Lucretius* is Lofty and Poetical in deſcribing the great *Phænomena* of Nature, there we are ſure to find him aſtoniſh'd, for, from whence comes his Vehemence, but from his Aſtoniſhment? which may give us a Suſpicion, that *Lucretius* was not ſo very aſſured of the Truth of his Opinion. For Effects aſtoniſh no Man. He who is aſtoniſh'd, is moved by the ſecret Cauſes of Things, which are two high or too deep for his Comprehenſion. So that in Places where there is no mention of Religion,

Lucretius in ſome meaſure, derives from that his Impetuous Golden Torrent of Verſe, his Vehemence and his Sublimity.

And thus I have inquired into the Merits of the Ancients, with all imaginable Impartiality, and have attempted to ſhew, that they had the Advantage of the Moderns in the Greatneſs of Poetry; but that they deriv'd it not from any Superiority of Faculties, or any external or internal Advantage, abſtracted from the Nature of the Subjects of which they treated, but only from incorporating Poetry with Religion.

The END *of the* FIRST PART.

THE ADVANCEMENT AND REFORMATION OF Modern POETRY.

PART II.

CHAP. I.

That the Deſign of the True Religion and Poetry are the ſame.

IN the former Part of this Treatiſe, we attempted to ſhew, that the Ancient *Grecians* and *Romans* excell'd the Moderns in the Greatneſs of Poetry, and ſo endeavour'd to oblige a very conſiderable Party of Mankind; who admire the Ancient

Poets to that degree, that they deſpair of their being ever equall'd, much leſs ſurpaſs'd by the Moderns; but then, that we might diſoblige, as little as we could, another Body of Men, who have a high Opinion of the Moderns, and are apt to think them upon an equal Foot with the Ancients, we endeavour'd to prove, That the Ancients deriv'd their Pre-eminence, not ſo much from any real Superiority that they had in themſelves, as from the Subjects of which they treated; which Subjects were Sacred, either in their own Nature, or by their Manner of handling them. So that we have taken the moſt effectual Courſe that we could poſſibly do, to remove the Deſpair of one Party, without too much exalting them, and to check the unreaſonable Preſumption of the other, without too much depreſſing them; that ſo the one Party might deſpond no more, and the other be ſecure and careleſs no longer; but that, the Paſſions and Prejudices being removed, which have hitherto obſtructed the Advancement of a noble Art, and both Parties being reconcil'd and united in the common Opinion, that the Ancients, tho' they are exalted above us, are not beyond our Reach, may immediately take fire, and contending with a noble Emulation, puſh on the Art to ſome Degrees of Perfection, beyond what it has attain'd for theſe laſt Fifteen hundred Years. For, in the remaining Part of this Treatiſe, we ſhall make it our Buſineſs to con-

convince the Reader, with all the Brevity that the Importance of the Affair will admit of, that the Moderns by joining Poetry with the true Religion, will have much the Advantage of the Ancients in the main, tho' they may fall ſhort of them in ſome particular Poems.

But here it concerns us to anſwer an Objection. For, perhaps, the Reader may ſay, How can you maintain, that the Chriſtian Religion will be ſuch a Help to Poetry, when you have already, in a former Treatiſe, made uſe of the Authority of *Boileau*, to ſhew, that Chriſtianity and Poetry were things that were inconſiſtent.

De la foy d'un chretien les myſteres terribles
D' ornemens egayez ne ſont point ſuſceptibles,
L' Evangele al Eſprit n' offre de tous cotez
Que penetence e faire, ou tourmens meritez.
Et de vos fictions le melange coupable
Meme a ſes verites donne l'air de la fable.

That is,

The terrible Myſteries of the Chriſtian Faith are not capable of delightful Ornaments; that the Goſpel offers nothing to our View, but Repentance on the one ſide, and eternal Torments on the other; and that the criminal Mixture of Poetical Fictions, gave a fabulous Air even to its moſt Sacred Truths.

To which we anſwer; that we only made uſe of this Paſſage in the foremention'd Treatiſe, to ſhew, That the Myſteries of the Chriſtian Religion were not to be mix'd with Fiction, and conſequently, that it would be a hard matter to contrive *Machines* for an Epick Poem, upon a Modern Chriſtian Subject; and if *Boileau* means any thing more by the foremention'd Paſſage, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew that he is miſtaken, and that there may not only be moſt exalted Poetry upon a Chriſtian Subject, without Machines, and without Fiction, but that the True Religion is more favourable to Poetry than Paganiſm, or Philoſophy or Deiſm; and I ſhall firſt inquire into the Reaſon of the Thing, and afterwards ſee how it is ſupported by Matter of Fact.

Firſt, I ſhall inquire into the Reaſon of the Thing, and I make no doubt, but to make it appear, that the nearer Poetry comes to Perfection, the more agreeable it is to the Deſign of the True Religion, and that, conſequently, Poetry is much more noble, and more inſtructive, and more beneficial to Mankind, than either Hiſtory or Philoſophy.

In order to the doing which, Let us examine what the Deſign is of the True Religion, and we ſhall find, that not only the Deſign of Poetry is the very ſame, but the very Methods of attaining that Deſign the ſame, as far as they can be Humanly proſecuted; tho' at the ſame Time it muſt be confeſs'd, that Poetry,

Poetry, tho' the nobleſt of all Arts, and preferable either to Hiſtory or Philoſophy, falls as ſhort of the Excellence of the True Religion, as Human Invention does of Divine Wiſdom.

The Deſign of every Religion, muſt be the Happineſs of thoſe who embrace it. Impoſtors, and all who ſet up new Religions for ſome politicks Ends, muſt always pretend this, or they will have no Followers; for all Men propound Happineſs to themſelves in every thing that they do; and the Reaſon why ſo few Men are thoroughly and intirely of any Religion, is, Becauſe they are not ſufficiently convinc'd, that it will make them happy. But, as even falſe Religions muſt pretend to make thoſe who profeſs them happy, ſo the True one muſt really effect it: For the True Religion, whether it is innate or reveal'd, muſt certainly come from God, and muſt be given by him as a Rule and a Law for thoſe who embrace it to walk by. Now all Laws that are made by good Law-givers, are made for the Happineſs of thoſe who embrace them. But God muſt be good, and conſequently, cannot make Laws, only becauſe it is his Arbitrary Will; no, he muſt make them, becauſe He, who beſt knows the Nature of his own Creatures, knows that they will find their Happineſs in being conformable to them. But if the Deſign of all Religion muſt be to make Men happy, why then, that muſt be the True

Religion that makes Men the moſt happy: And conſequently, that muſt be the True Religion that has the ſimpleſt Deſign, and the ſhorteſt, and the ſureſt. For the Deſign of the True Religion being to make Men happy, it muſt neceſſarily be of ſuch a Nature, as that all may be capable of it. For if a Religion, of which none but Men of Senſe were capable, ſhould be the True Religion, it would follow, that God had made moſt Men Blockheads, and afterwards made them wretched for being ſo. But now let us examine, What Religion that is, that takes the ſhorteſt, and the ſureſt, and moſt admirable Method for making thoſe who embrace it happy?

Since the Deſign of all Religion muſt be to make Men happy, and the only True Religion can effect that Deſign, which all others in vain pretend to, becauſe only the True Religion can come from God, who alone underſtands our Natures, and alone knows that which will the moſt pleaſe us, it follows, That all who are not really of the True Religion, cannot be perfectly happy. Now this is certain, that Mankind has in all Countries, and in all Ages, in all Places, and at all Times, complain'd of the Want of Happineſs. Both Ancients and Moderns, Philoſophers and the People, have agreed, that Man was miſerable. And this univerſal Conſent, may be ſufficient to ſhew, that the Miſery of Man is real, and not imaginary; beſides,

beſides, they have all, both Ancients and Moderns, Philoſophers and Poets, Men of Senſe, and the Vulgar, admirably agreed in deſcribing it. They have all conſented in this, That the Miſery of Man, proceeded from a perpetual Conflict that is within him, and from a Diſcord continually reigning among the Faculties of the Soul; a cruel War between the Paſſions and Senſes, and the Reaſon, while the Reaſon violently draws one way, and the Paſſions and the Senſes another; the latter endeavouring ſtill to be pleas'd, by getting the Upper-hand of the former, and the former contending to be ſatisfied by ſubduing the latter, while neither Party can gain an intire Victory, but an eternal Conflict remains; for tho' the frequent Advantages are on the ſide of the Paſſions, yet Reaſon rallies from time to time, and maintains a running Fight.

———*Video meliora proboque*
Deteriora ſequor ———

Says *Medea* in *Ovid.*

And ſays *Horace*, 8th Epiſtle of the Firſt Book.

———*Dic multa, & pulchra minantem,*
Vivere nec rectè, nec ſuaviter. Haud quia grando
Contuderit vites, oleamque momorderit æſtus;
Nec quia longinquis armentum ægrotet in arvis:

Sed

Sed quia mente minùs validus, quàm corpore toto,
Nil audire velim, nil diſcere, quod levet ægrum:
Fidis offendar medicis, iraſcar amicis,
Cur me funeſto properent arcere veterno:
Quæ nocuere ſequar: fugiam quæ profore credam:

But St. *Paul*, who knew the Cauſe of this Miſery of Mankind, has given by much the moſt clear and lively Deſcription of it. *Rom.* chap. vii.

15. *For that which I do, I allow not; for what I would, that do I not, but what I hate, that do I.*

16. *If then I do that which I would not, I conſent unto the Law that it is good.*

17. *Now then, it is no more I, but Sin that dwelleth in me.*

18. *For I know that in me, that is in my Fleſh, dwelleth no good thing, for to will is preſent with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not.*

19. *For the Good which I would, I do not, but the Evil which I would not, that I do.*

20. *Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I, but Sin that dwelleth in me.*

21. *I find then a Law, that when I would do Good, Evil is preſent with me.*

22. *For I delight in the Law of God after the inward Man.*

23. *But I ſee another Law in my Members, warring againſt the Law in my Mind, and bringing me into Captivity to the Law of Sin, which is in my Members.*

24. O

24. *O wretched Man that I am! who ſhall deliver me from the Body of this Death?*

25. *I thank God, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, ſo then with the Mind I my ſelf ſerve the Law of God, but with the Fleſh the Law of Sin.*

Thus hath St. *Paul* given a lively Deſcription, of the Conflict that is in the Human Soul between Paſſion and Reaſon, becauſe he very well knew the Cauſe of it. The Philoſophers felt the Effect, and could deſcribe it tolerably well; but being wholly ignorant of the Cauſe, they took that to be a Defect in Nature, which is really an infectious Diſtemper; and here lay the Folly of thoſe People, in believing that they were capable of altering Nature: Which puts me in Mind of an Aſtrological King of *Naples*, who not being very well pleas'd, with what he thought the Syſtem and Contrivance of the Univerſe, ſaid, That if God, when he made the World, would have vouchſaf'd to have conſulted him, he could have given him very good Advice. For, ſo by their Writings the Philoſophers ſeem to have been of Opinion, that whereas God had made Man Impious, they could make him Good, and whereas he had made him a Blockhead, they could make him Wiſe.

But the Philoſophers, not knowing the Cauſe of the Miſery of Man, made very ſucceſsleſs Attempts towards the making us happy; for, whether they ſupported the Reaſon againſt the Paſſions, all that they gain'd

gain'd was to inflame the Contention which they deſign'd to extinguiſh; and by rouſing and exaſperating the Parties, make that War be carried on with Vehemence, which, perhaps, was in a languiſhing State before; or whether they animated the Paſſions againſt the Reaſon, they could only mortify what they could never vanquiſh.

Thus, whether they endeavour'd to live up to the Dictates of Reaſon, the Paſſions plagu'd them by a very violent Reſiſtance; or, whether they endeavour'd to plunge themſelves in ſenſual Pleaſure, they could no further oppreſs the Reaſon, than they ſtupified the whole Man; and Remorſe at laſt, like the Dragon that watch'd the *Heſperian* Fruit, was never to be laid aſleep.

But, tho' the Philoſophers ſeem'd wholly in the Dark, the Poets appear'd to have a Glimmering of the Truth, as we may conclude from the Fable of *Pandora* and *Epimetheus*; whether they had it from old Tradition, or from a noble Effort of Reaſon. For, ſays Mr. *Mede*, " If there were no " Scripture, yet the unſampled Irregularity " of our whole Nature, which all the Time " of our Life, runs counter to all Order " and right Reaſon, the woful Miſery of " our Condition being a Scene of Sorrow, " without any Reſt or Contentment, this " might breed ſome general Suſpicion, that " *ab initio non fuit ita*, but that he who " made us Lords of his Creatures, made us

" not

" not ſo worthleſs and vile as now we are,
" but that ſome common Father to us all,
" had drank ſome ſtrange and deviliſh
" Poiſon, wherewith the whole Race was
" infected." Thus far goes Mr. *Mede*; and I will make bold to add, by the Leave of the Clergy, that this Suſpicion might very well grow up to Reaſon and Certainty, tho' there were no Scripture. For, that Man is miſerable, Experience aſſures us; but ſince Man is a Creature capable of Happineſs, and one who knows his Miſery, Reaſon may tell us, that Man could never be created Miſerable, for that would have been contrary to the Goodneſs of God, which is his darling Attribute. Since God might as well damn his Creatures for nothing, as he might create them miſerable. Man, therefore, was certainly created happy, and happy had he continued till now, if it had not been for his own Fault, becauſe it had been repugnant to the Juſtice of God, to puniſh Man for nothing. Thus far we may conclude then, by the Force of Reaſon, that Man has committed ſome horrible Crime, the which has made him miſerable.

But tho' the Strength of Reaſon may reach thus far, yet it could never inform Man of the Nature of the Crime, the committing of which has made him miſerable, nor in what his original Happineſs conſiſted. All that we can gueſs by Reaſon, is this, That ſince the Miſery of Man at preſent, lies in the

the Conflict that he has within himſelf, and in the Civil War which is maintain'd in his Faculties, that his original Happineſs conſiſted in the Peace and Agreement, and the Harmony that was between them, and that the Crime that cauſed his Unhappineſs, was, in all likelihood, ſomething that naturally and neceſſarily broke that Harmony and that Agreement. And that we may ſee how far theſe Conjectures agree with what our Religion ſays of it, let us make ſome Inquiry into the Account which Sacred Writ has given of it.

That tells us, That Man was not in the Beginning, what he is at preſent. That he was created Holy, Innocent, Perfect. That his Creator fill'd him with the Brightneſs of Knowledge, and with a luminous lively Intelligence. That he then had a ſtrict Dependance on his Maker. That he communicated the Wonders of his Glory to him. That the Eye of Man then ſaw the Majeſty of God; and that this Creature, ſo miſerable now, was then moſt intirely happy. That he was unclouded, untroubled, impained, impaſſive, immortal. This is the Account that our Religion gives of the primitive State of Man. It tells us, How great his Knowledge was, his Happineſs and his Perfection. Let us now ſee how much his Paſſions and his Senſes were able to contribute to ſo much Felicity.

That Man, in his Original State, had Paſſions, and great Paſſions, is certain. For without Paſſion there can be no Happineſs, becauſe there can be no Pleaſure. Beſides, it muſt be by a great Paſſion, or by great Paſſions, that the firſt Man muſt fall. For by the Weakneſs of his Reaſon he could not be loſt: For if he had not had Reaſon enough to know that he ought not to have committed the Tranſgreſſion which ruin'd him, why then the Ruin of Man had not been his own Fault; Man, therefore, before the Fall had Paſſions, but being in a State of perfect Felicity, he could conſequently be ſubject to no Paſſions, which were not intirely conſiſtent with that. He walked with God, and was then united to him, becauſe the Creator was pleaſed to communicate himſelf in ſo great a Degree to his Creature. Man, therefore, conſtantly contemplated God, not ſo much by the Force of Reaſon, as of Intuition, or a luminous lively Intelligence. God acted upon his Mind, and he felt him, as well as ſaw him, and conſequently, Admir'd, Lov'd, Deſir'd, Ador'd him, and the Reſult of theſe charming Paſſions was a Joy unſpeakable. For the more they were exalted, the more his Reaſon aporov'd of them; and ſince it knew, that he could never ſuffer by them in that State of Happineſs, and of Immortality, it eternally exhorted him to perpetuate them, and told him, that they could never be too high for their

their Glorious Object. So that Man, in his Primitive State, was always in lofty raviſhing Tranſports. For Love, Admiration, Joy and Deſire, thoſe charming Paſſions, were all that he knew, of which bliſsful Love was always the Chief. For God making Man a ſociable Creature, gave him ſuch a ſort of a Happineſs, as that the Felicity of one might produce that of another; and what could that be but an habitual Charity, or loving God and Man for the Sake of God. Our bliſsful Sire enjoy'd a ſincere Felicity, and conſequently, could never know any Trouble, nor any Paſſion that had a Mixture of Trouble, as Anger, Sorrow, Fear, and the like. Much leſs could Ambition find Room in his Breaſt, with Envy, Hatred, Pride, and Revenge, and the reſt of thoſe turbulent Paſſions that are utterly inconſiſtent with Charity.

And as his Paſſions were always pleaſing, ſo his Senſes were never ſhock'd: The happy Creature convers'd with Angels, and ſaw the Majeſty of his Maker. And for the terreſtrial Objects which were around him, and which were all ſubjected to his univerſal Empire, whenever he ſurvey'd them, like his Creator, he found that they were always good; and as the Creatures never were diſobedient, he was never diſpleas'd with them. For, as he had neither Fear nor Knowledge of Suffering, Antipathy, Averſion, Horror, and the like, were Things that he never knew, which in this woful

State of Miſery, are ſo often Nature's Intelligencers, to adviſe us of approaching Harm. Thus all the Faculties were always pleas'd, and Man was bleſs'd unſpeakably.

But the Reſult of this perfect Harmony, was not only continual Happineſs, but unclouded Knowledge and Immortality. For, as from the Agreement of the vital Faculties, and their concording Motions, Spirit and Health, and pleaſant Eaſe, and Vigour of Senſe proceeds; ſo from the Harmony of the Rational and Animal Powers proceeded a luminous lively Intelligence, and a bliſsful Immortality. For Pleaſure was the Reſult of that Agreement, and ſince Death can only come by Pain, he who is in a State of perpetual Pleaſure, muſt by conſequence be Immortal.

But Man, alas! was unable to ſupport ſo much Happineſs without Preſumption. He form'd the Deſign of growing Independant, of ſhaking off the Government of Him who made him, and finding his Felicity apart from God. This made him conceive the Horrible Crime, of diverting his Affections from Him who alone was worthy of them, to Things that were form'd ſo many degrees inferior to him: and that which made the unpardonable Enormity of that Crime was this, That when God had created him with an ardent Deſire of Happineſs, and had created him of ſuch a Nature, that his full and his perfect Happineſs lay in his ſtrict

Dependance on Him, and had given him a clear Underſtanding to knows this; that, I ſay, made the unpardonable Enormity of his Crime, that, contrary to this Nature, and this Deſire, and this unclouded Knowledge, he revolted and fell off from God, and by the Suggeſtion of his greateſt Enemy, tax'd him at once with Folly and Envy, in believing himſelf capable of finding and enjoying a greater Felicity, than what his Maker deſign'd for him. And thus Man's fatal original Sin, whether the Buſineſs of the Tree of Knowledge is Literal or Allegorical, conſiſted in his horribly diverting his Affections from his God to the Creatures. And thus the Harmony of his Intellectual and Animal Powers was very miſerably broke. For Reaſon diſapprov'd of the unworthy Objects that Man had choſen for his Paſſions, and the Paſſions being Natural and Congenial to the Soul, could not be idle, and Man could not reduce them to their primitive Object. For God had abandon'd him to himſelf, and how ſhould Man of himſelf approach Infinity?

And now the bliſsful Time was no more, when Man was only touch'd with tranſporting Paſſions. And now the Force of thoſe charming Paſſions was continually curb'd by Reaſon, which utterly diſapprov'd of their Objects; and a Thouſand vexatious ones ſprung up among them, like Cockle, to choak the vital Seed, and which were partly the

Reſult

Reſult of preſent Miſery, and partly of paſt Felicity.

Beſides, the Senſes partook of the ſame Diſorder that had ſeiz'd the Paſſions; and they that during his State of Innocence, were always pleas'd with the Approbation of Reaſon, and were ne'er diſturb'd, now either betray'd him to Concupiſcence, or were ſhock'd at their ſeveral Objects. His Eye and his Ear, thoſe noble Miniſters of the Underſtanding, were no longer charm'd with the Voice of God, and the glorious Preſence of Angels; and were either too much engag'd by the Terreſtrial Objects around them, or diſturb'd in deſpight of Reaſon. The Creatures whom God had furniſh'd, with Inſtinct ſufficient for the Care of their Preſervation, in their degenerate Monarch, beheld their Enemy. They gladly obey'd him during his Innocence, as loyal Subjects do a good King, but when he grew wicked, he grew a Tyrant, and they at the ſame Time turn'd Rebels. From hence Averſions, Horrors, Antipathies, and Fear, and Hate, and Rage ſprung up in them; and Man was got into a State of War with all the inferior Creatures, who of his humble Vaſſals before, were now his potent Enemies. Both Parties were on their Guard inceſſantly, always dreaded, and always terrify'd.

And thus the Harmony of the Intellectual and Animal Powers was diſſolv'd by Original Sin. And the Ignorance of this, caus'd all the Blunders of the Philoſophers. They knew very well, that the Combat between the Reaſon and Paſſions caus'd the Miſery of Man, but they never dream'd of reconciling the Difference, becauſe, alas! they never thought that the Parties had once been Friends. All that they aim'd at, was to put an end to the Conflict, by deſtroying one of the Parties, and ſo ſome of them thought of ſtifling the Reaſon, and others of ſuppreſſing the Paſſions.

But the Folly of theſe two Deſigns was equally great, becauſe they are Attempts at Things that are equally impoſſible. For as long as Man is Man, he muſt have Reaſon, and as long as there is Reaſon, there will be Remorſe, which will rally from Time to Time, and be a Check upon the Exorbitance of the Paſſions. And tho' Remorſe could be intirely extinguiſh'd, as I believe it never can, yet Reaſon would be ſure to make its Declaration another way, and that is by our Inconſtancy in Pleaſure, and our want of Variety.

Nor is the Folly leſs of endeavouring to ſuppreſs the Paſſions, for either they muſt be wholly ſuppreſs'd or reſtrain'd; but all the Paſſions being Natural, in the Condition in which Man is now, none of them can be wholly ſuppreſs'd without deſtroying the Man,

Man, nor can ſome of them be ſo much as moderated, without maintaining conſtantly in the Soul a very violent Conflict, becauſe they were perfectly unreſtrain'd in their original Natures.

The Paſſions are either natural and congenial to the Soul, or accidental: Theſe firſt are thoſe which are pleaſing to it, as Love, Joy, Deſire, and with theſe the firſt Man was created; for Man was created Happy; but without theſe Paſſions there can be no Happineſs. The accidental Paſſions, as Anger, Envy, Indignation, and Deſire of Revenge, are thoſe with which Man at the firſt was not created, for they all include Miſery, and he was created Happy. They were all the Reſult of the Fall, which brought Woe to the Race of Men. Man is indeed capable of reſtraining theſe laſt, becauſe they all of them include Miſery, and he retaining a vehement Deſire of Happineſs, tho' join'd to an Impotence of attaining it, is by that very Deſire, capacitated to ſtruggle with apparent Miſery. But it muſt needs be a hard Contention when we pretend to moderate the firſt, becauſe there is ſomething within us, that ſecretly tells us, they are neceſſary to our Happineſs; and the Conflict muſt needs be violent, when we ſtrive againſt our own Happineſs. Beſides, they are as natural to the Soul as Reaſoning, and the Reſult of that; and a Reaſonable Creature can no more be without Admiration, Love and

Deſire, than it can be without Thinking, or without the Appetites of Senſe; and a Man can no more ſuppreſs the one by Philoſophy, than the other. He can no more take away Love and Deſire by Reaſoning, than he can ſatisfy Hunger and Thirſt with a Syllogiſm. All that he can arrive at, is either to conceal thoſe Paſſions, as he may do his Appetites, or to refuſe to act in conſequence of them, as he may in conſequence of Thinking, or of Senſual Appetites. Or, laſtly, He may weaken theſe congenial Paſſions by Mortification, as he may do his Appetites, or his Reaſon. For a Diſtemper weakens the whole Man, and Mortification is a Diſtemper, in effect, at leaſt. But when the Man is in Health, and his Senſes vigorous, and his Reaſon piercing, theſe Paſſions too will be ſtrong. And the more powerful the Reaſon is, the ſtronger will be the Paſſions: And, therefore, the Attempt to ſuppreſs theſe was Folly in the Philoſophers. For theſe Paſſions are the Pleaſure of the Soul, which cannot ſtruggle with Succeſs againſt Felicity. The Cauſe of their Miſtake was this, Some of them, as for Example, the *Stoicks*, thought that Reaſon diſapprov'd of the Paſſions, when ſhe only diſlik'd the Objects; whereas the *Cyrenaicks* on the other Hand, thought that Human Nature allow'd of the Objects, when it did nothing but approve of the Paſſions.

And

And this may ſerve to ſhew the Folly of Deiſm, as well as it may of Philoſophy. For Deiſm pretending, like Philoſophy, to combat all the Paſſions, muſt be founded on the Strength of Reaſon. But a Religion founded on the Strength of Reaſon, cannot be the True Religion. For the True Religion muſt be ſent from God, for the Happineſs of Mankind, and of that Religion all muſt be capable, as we have ſhewn above. But of a Religion founded on the Strength of Reaſon, and whoſe Proofs muſt therefore be deduc'd from a long Train of Conſequences, all Men are not capable, for every Religion muſt have Proofs, and all Men are not capable of the Proofs of ſuch a Religion as that. As for Example, before a Man can be a Deiſt effectually, he muſt be convinc'd of the Being of a God by Reaſon, and muſt be convinc'd, by the ſame Reaſon, that the World is govern'd by God. But to be capable of the Proofs that Deiſm gives of thoſe two Points, a Man muſt either have a very ſtrong Reaſon, or a very good Education, whereas not ſo much as one in Forty of Mankind has either. But all are capable of the Proofs of Revealed Religion: For, by proving the Divinity of the Revelation, the Doctrine is proved in courſe. Now the Divinity of the Revelation muſt be prov'd by Miracles. But Miracles are Proofs of which all Men are capable, becauſe they ſpeak to the Paſſions, and appeal to the

Senſes. Since therefore, the True Religion muſt be deſign'd for all; and all Men are capable of the Proofs of Reveal'd Religion, whereas not one in Forty is capable of the Proofs of Deiſm, it follows, that a Religion that is not Reveal'd, cannot be the True Religion.

Beſides, no Religion can be the True Religion, that is inſufficient to anſwer the Ends of Government. But a Religion that is not deſign'd for all, can never anſwer the Ends of Government. And therefore, Deiſm cannot be the True Religion. For there are but Two Things that can reſtrain Mankind, and keep them within the Power of Law; Religion, and Senſe enough to know their real Intereſt. But we have already made it appear above, that whoever wants good Senſe cannot be reſtrain'd by Deiſm.

That Deiſm is inſufficient to anſwer the Ends of Government, may be farther plain from Matter of Fact; for it would be an eaſy Thing to convince the Reader that there never was any tolerable Government in the World without a Reveal'd Religion; and that the Governments that have been moſt renown'd upon Earth, flouriſh'd with their reſpective Revelations, and with them deçay'd, as the *Iſraelites* did with their Prophets, the *Grecians* with their Oracles, and the *Romans* with their Divinations; ſo that either the True Religion can be in the World without Order, and without Peace,

or

or Deiſm cannot poſſibly be the True Religion.

Again, either that can be the True Religion, which can contribute nothing even to the Happineſs of thoſe who embrace it, or Deiſm cannot be the True Religion. For Deiſm contributes nothing at all to the Happineſs even of thoſe who are capable of it, becauſe that by combating and reſiſting the Paſſions, it maintains the War of the Faculties, inſtead of appeaſing it.

Thus we have ſhewn, That the Deſign of the True Religion muſt not only be to make Men happy, but muſt effectually do it; that the Philoſophers indeed had that Deſign, but blunder'd in the Execution of it; and, by pretending either to ſet up our Paſſions above our Reaſon, or our Reaſon above our Paſſions, only maintain'd an eternal Conflict in the Breaſts they deſign'd to eaſe; that the Deiſt does the very ſame Thing, by his Endeavours to exalt Reaſon, by depreſſing the Paſſions. Let us now ſhew, how the Chriſtian Religion exalts our Reaſon, by exalting the Paſſions, and by a plain and a ſhort, but a moſt admirable Deſign, reſtores the Harmony of the Human Faculties, and the Felicity of the firſt Man.

For, after that Chriſtianity has gain'd its Profeſſors, by proving after the moſt plain and ſimple manner, all that is neceſſary to be believ'd in it; that is, by Miracles, atteſted by unexceptionable Witneſſes, it gains

its End, which is the Happineſs of its Believers, in ſo plain, ſo ſure, and ſo ſhort a Way, that the Way to Happineſs, and the End, is but one and the ſame Thing, and differs only in Degree. *Set your Affections on Things above, and not on Things below*, ſays the Apoſtle, *Coloſſ.* iii. 2. That is, Do but earneſtly deſire of God to incline your Affections to Him their primitive Object; Do but deſire it, and he will incline them, and the great Buſineſs of Religion is done, the Harmony of the Human Faculties reſtor'd, and the Felicity of the firſt Man, in ſome meaſure at leaſt, renew'd. Nay, the Way is ſhorter and plainer even than this. For, do but earneſtly deſire of God to give you Charity, and he will give it, and with that give every Virtue. For, to ſhew how plain, how ſhort, how admirable, the Deſign is of this Divine Religion, Love, which is but a ſingle Paſſion, and the moſt pleaſing of all the Paſſions, comprehends all its Duties, and all its Felicity. St. *Paul* has given an admirable Reaſon why it comprehends all its Duties; for *Love*, ſays he, *worketh no Ill to his Neighbour, and is therefore the fulfilling of the Law.* And that it is incluſive of all its Felicity, may be concluded from hence, that Charity gently reſtraining thoſe tumultuous Paſſions which diſturb and torment the Mind, exalts all the pleaſing Affections which are natural and congenial to the Soul, and exalts the very Reaſon of Mankind, by exalting thoſe charming

charming Paſſions. For Reaſon being troubled no more in its Functions, by the painful Conflict which it maintain'd before, is free to diſcern and diſtinguiſh Divine Truth, and now employs the Extent and Stretch of its Power, in confirming and augmenting the Force of thoſe aſpiring Paſſions, which, while they were directed to mortal Objects, it eſteem'd its mortal Enemies. And as the Reaſon rouzes and excites the Paſſions, the Paſſions, as it were, in a fiery Vehicle, tranſport the Reaſon above Mortality, which mounting, ſoars to the Heaven of Heavens, upon the Wings of thoſe very Affections, that before repreſs'd the noble Efforts that it made to aſcend the Skies.

And thus we have ſeen, how the Chriſtian Religion reconciles Paſſion to Reaſon. And while the troubleſome Virtues of Deiſts and old Philoſophers, are employed in reſtraining thoſe charming Paſſions, which are ſo natural to the Soul of Man, and which, rightly directed, conſtitute all its Felicity, the Cardinal Virtues of the True Religion, as Faith, and Hope, and Charity, are exalted Paſſions themſelves. And as Chriſtianity confirms and cheriſhes all the pleaſing Affections, which are to the Soul, as ſo many delicious Friends, and ſo many dear Relations, the very Converſation of which is ſufficient to makes it happy, it gently appeaſes the tumultuous Paſſions, accidental uneaſy Gueſts that interrupt its Pleaſure.

But

But the Chriſtian Religion reſtores the Harmony of the Human Powers to a greater Degree than this, and provides even a Pleaſure of Senſe that may be highly approv'd of by Reaſon. For tho' the Chriſtian in this Life, is not allowed to expect that in a Sovereign Degree, yet, ſince there is no Sight ſo charming to the Eye, and no Muſick ſo harmonious to the Ear, as the Voice and Looks of thoſe whom we love, the Chriſtian Religion by commanding us, 1 Epiſt. of St. *Peter*, ch. i. ver. 22. *To love one another with a pure Heart fervently*, has provided in an admirable manner for the Delight of thoſe noble Senſes.

Thus the Proofs of Chriſtianity are ſhort and plain, and its Doctrine that leads to Felicity, admirably ſhort and unperplexed, whereas the Proofs of Deiſm are abſtruſe (I mean to the People they are abſtruſe, and we have ſhewn, that the True Religion muſt be deſigned for all) and the Method that it takes to make us Happy, tedious and vexatious. And this is extremely remarkable, that the very Morality which in Deiſm, and in Philoſophy is prov'd at the firſt, perhaps, with Difficulty, and, perhaps, at the laſt obſcurely; and when it is prov'd, obey'd with Pain, becauſe it ſhocks all the pleaſing Paſſions which ſo firmly inhere to the Soul, that very Morality in the Chriſtian Religion is clearly and eaſily prov'd to all, becauſe the Divinity of its Revelation is clearly and

eaſily

eaſily prov'd, and when it is prov'd, is purſued with Pleaſure, becauſe it is every Part of it dictated by Love, the beſt and ſweeteſt of all the Paſſions.

And thus Chriſtianity performs in a Moment, what Philoſophy and Deiſm have for Ages in vain attempted. For God can touch the Heart in a Moment, and a ſhort Contrition makes Way for a long Felicity. And the Wiſdom of God ſeems loudly to declare the Simplicity of his great Deſign, by the Perſons whom he choſe to execute it. For had there been any Thing perplexed or difficult in it, Men of choice Education and great Parts, would have been choſen to expound it. But it was ſo eaſy, ſo clear, ſo agreeable to the Nature of Man, whether conſider'd as an Individual, or a Member of a vaſt Society (for Charity, that makes the Happineſs of Particulars, tends to the Felicity of the whole Community; and whereas Juſtice is ſatisfied with the reſtraining Men from the doing Harm, Charity, the moſt active and beſt natur'd of all Virtues, engages him to the doing Good; and there can be no ſuch prevalent Motive for the making any one happy, as becauſe we love him) the Deſign, I ſay, of this Holy Religion, is ſo agreeable to the Nature of Man, that God made choice of Twelve poor Fiſhermen, or ſomething more vile to Human Regard than Fiſhermen, to propagate its Divine Doctrine. And to whom did

did they preach it? Not to Brutal Savages, as *Orpheus* did his pretended Revelation before them, nor to bloody Barbarians, as *Mahomet* did his Fanatick Enthuſiaſm afterwards, but to the moſt civiliz'd and knowing Nations of the World, when Learning was at the greateſt Heighth amongſt them; to the Provinces of the *Leſſer Aſia*, who were the moſt ſubtle People on the Earth; to *Greece* the great Inventreſs of Arts; and to *Rome* the Miſtreſs of Nations; to *Rome*, that with her victorious Armies, had even then, juſt then, ſubdu'd and civiliz'd the barbarous World. And Twelve poor ignorant contemptible Fiſhermen, who were deſpis'd by their own Nation, and whoſe Nation itſelf was almoſt univerſally deſpicable, in a very ſhort Time, eſtabliſh'd this Doctrine in the midſt of theſe knowing Nations; nay, and eſtabliſh'd it without Arts, without Eloquence, without Reputation, without Power, and downright Innocence and Simplicity prevail'd o'er the Subtilty of the *Aſiaticks*, the vigorous lively Penetration of the *Greeks*, and the profound Solidity of the *Romans*. So that Knowledge bluſhing, was inſtructed by Ignorance, and the vain Efforts of all Human Wiſdom ſtood confounded by the Fooliſhneſs of Preaching; And the Apoſtle had a great deal of Reaſon to exult in the Firſt Epiſtle to the *Cor.* chap. i. v. 20, 21. *Where is the Wiſe? Where is the Scribe? Where is the Diſputer of this World?*

Hath

Hath not God made fooliſh the Wiſdom of this World? For after that by the Wiſdom of God, the World by Wiſdom knew not God, it pleaſed God by the Fooliſhneſs of Preaching to ſave them that believe; and v. the 27th, ibid. *God hath choſen the fooliſh Things of this World to confound the Wiſdom of the Wiſe.* So that this Religion, propagated under theſe ſtrange Diſadvantages, by Ignorance againſt Philoſophy, by Simplicity againſt Arts and Eloquence, by Weakneſs againſt all the Oppoſition of Power, by abject and contemptible Perſons, againſt the Noiſe and Renown of Wiſdom, by Men under Poverty and Perſecution, againſt all the Threats of Imperial Tyrants; this Divine Religion, embrac'd with Danger, boaſted of in Sufferings, and taught in Martyrdom; this Religion, I ſay, thus wonderfully propagated, muſt needs have had ſomething in the Deſign of it, when it was but never ſo little attended to, that is extremely agreeable to the Nature of Man, and muſt be better adapted to make a Creature, compounded of Paſſions and Reaſon, happy, than either Power or Place, or Worldly Proſperity, or Fame, or Philoſophy, were before. But what could be ſo agreeable to the Nature of a Creature compounded of the foreſaid Faculties, as that which reconciled thoſe Faculties, which neither Fame nor Philoſophy, Riches nor Power could ever be found to do? or, How could Twelve poor wretched Fiſhermen, without Educa-

Education, without Parts, comprehend what the World's great Sages could never find out? or, How could they conſent againſt apparent Intereſt, in making it known to the World, if they had not been inſtructed and inclin'd to act by ſomething that was more than Human?

And thus we have ſhewn, How that the Deſign of all Religion muſt be to make Men happy, but that the True Religion muſt not only deſign it, but muſt effectually do it. And then we proceeded to ſhew, That the Miſery of Man conſiſting in the Conflict which is maintain'd within him, his Happineſs, by conſequence, muſt proceed from the Harmony which is in the Human Faculties; then we ſhew'd how that Harmony came to be broke, and how it was afterwards by the Chriſtian Religion reſtored.

But now, as the End of every Religion muſt be the Happineſs of thoſe who embrace it, ſo the Deſign of every Art muſt be the very ſame, as has been always acknowledged by all who have enquired into the Nature of Art in general, or into the Deſigns of particular Arts. And as the True Religion muſt not only propound the Happineſs of its Profeſſors, but muſt really effect it; and as that alone is the True Religion, which makes the beſt Proviſion for the Happineſs of thoſe who profeſs it; ſo that muſt be the beſt and the nobleſt Art, which brings the greateſt Felicity with it. But as the Miſery

of

of Man proceeds from the Diſcord, and thoſe Civil Jars that are maintain'd within him, it follows, that nothing can make him Happy, but what can remove that Diſcord, and reſtore the Harmony of the Human Faculties. So that that muſt be the beſt and the nobleſt Art, which makes the beſt Proviſion at the ſame Time for the Satisfaction of all the Faculties, the Reaſon, the Paſſions, the Senſes. But none of them provides in ſuch a ſovereign Manner as Poetry, for the Satisfaction of the whole Man together. In ſome of them only Reaſon finds its Account, as in Logick and Mathematicks. In ſome of them only Reaſon and Paſſion, as in the Ancient Eloquence, and that by no means in a ſovereign Degree, for ſometimes the Paſſions oppreſs the Reaſon, and ſometimes Reaſon excludes the Paſſions. In others the Paſſions and the Senſes are charm'd, while Reaſon finds little Contentment in them. Thus Muſick by its Harmony raiſes the Paſſions, at the ſame Time that it pleaſes the Ear, and Painting by its Touches moves the Affections, at the ſame Time that it charms the Eye. But in a ſublime and accompliſh'd Poem, the Reaſon, and Paſſions, and Senſes are pleas'd at the ſame Time ſuperlatively. The Reaſon in the Soundneſs and Importance of the Moral, and the Greatneſs and Juſtneſs of an Harmonious Deſign, whoſe Parts, ſo beautiful when they are conſidered ſeparately, become tranſporting upon

a View of the whole, while we are never weary of contemplating their exact Proportion, and beautiful Symmetry, and their ſecret wonderful Dependance, while they are all animated by the ſame Spirit, in order to the ſame End. The Reaſon further finds its Account, in the exact perpetual Obſervance of Decorums, and in beholding itſelf exalted, by the Exaltation of the Paſſions, and in ſeeing thoſe Paſſions, in their fierceſt Tranſports, confin'd to thoſe Bounds, which that has ſeverely preſcrib'd them. That the Paſſions muſt find their Account in Poetry, we have endeavour'd to prove in the former Part of this Treatiſe, but we cannot forbear taking notice of this, That thoſe very Paſſions which plague and torment us in Life, pleaſe us, nay, tranſport us in Poetry. That the noble Senſes find their Account in an accompliſh'd Poem, no one who has read one, can a Moment doubt. Nor *Corelli*'s Hand, nor *Syphace*'s Voice, could ever, to a judicious Ear, equal the *Virgilian* Harmony: Which has all the Maſtery, with all the Air, and all the Sweetneſs, with all the Force, that the moſt delicate Ear can require. Tho' all his Numbers are always perfect, yet he never dwells upon any; and they which are in themſelves ſo pleaſing, delight us the more, becauſe we are immediately forc'd to leave them for the Perfection of ſome different Harmony. Nor is the Eye leſs ſatisfied than the Ear; for an admirable Poet always paints,

and

and all his Pictures are always Beautiful; let the real Objects be never ſo Odious, let them be never ſo Dreadful, yet he is ſure to paint them Delightful. For, tho' ſometimes a vigorous lively Imitation of Creatures that are in their Natures noxious, may be capable of giving us Terror, yet Nature, by giving us a ſecret Intelligence that the Object is not real, can turn even that tormenting Paſſion to Pleaſure.

Thus Poetry, by reſtoring the Harmony of the Human Faculties, provides for the Happineſs of Mankind, better than any other Human Invention whatever. And 'tis for this Reaſon that it has always been ſo highly eſteem'd by the greateſt of Men. They who have arriv'd at the being Maſters of the Univerſe, have afterwards entertain'd the Ambition of becoming Poets; and after they have acquir'd a great deal of Fame by making whole Nations miſerable, have aſpir'd to the more charming Glory of making Mankind happy. 'Tis for this very Reaſon, that this Delicious Art has had as many Confeſſors, if I may be allow'd to call them ſo, almoſt as Religion itſelf. 'Tis for this very Reaſon, that ſo many have been willing to renounce all Worldly Greatneſs for it, and Pleaſure which attends on Power, and have been contented to live poor and miſerable, pitied by the Wiſe, and contemn'd by Fools, perſecuted by Fortune, and hated by one another.

For, no Man leaves Pleaſure, but for greater Pleaſure, and he who forſakes all the World for Poetry, muſt find a Happineſs in that, which all the World could not ſupply him with. Poetry ſeems to be a noble Attempt of Nature, by which it endeavours to exalt itſelf to its happy primitive State; and he who is entertain'd with an accompliſh'd Poem, is, for a Time, at leaſt, reſtored to Paradiſe. That happy Man converſes boldly with Immortal Beings. Tranſported, he beholds the Gods aſcending and deſcending, and every Paſſion, in its Turn, is charm'd, while his Reaſon is ſupremely ſatisfied. Perpetual Harmony attends his Ear, his Eye perpetual Pleaſure. Ten thouſand different Objects he ſurveys, and the moſt dreadful pleaſe him. Tygers and Lions he beholds, like the firſt Man, with Joy, becauſe, like him, he ſees them without Danger. But nothing that is merely Human can be on all ſides perfect. The Delight which Poetry gives, is neither perpetual, nor are all Men capable of it. Religion alone can provide Man a Pleaſure that is laſting, as it may be univerſal. Poetical Fire neither always burns in us, nor can it always warm us; but Charity, like the ſacred Flame that was the Guardian of the *Roman* Empire, if 'tis with Care maintain'd, like that, becomes, like that, eternal.

But

But now, ſince the Deſign of Poetry, and the very Method of proſecuting that Deſign, as far as it can be Humanly proſecuted, is the ſame with that of the True Religion, ſince the very Thing that they both propoſe is to exalt the Reaſon, by exalting the Paſſions, and ſo make Happy the whole Man, by making Internal Diſcord ceaſe; I appeal to any one, whether Poetry muſt not agree better with that Religion, whoſe Deſigns are the very ſame with it, than with Paganiſm or Philoſophy, or Deiſm, whoſe Deſigns have been ſhewn repugnant to it. In ſhort, when the Pagan Theology was brought nearer to the Chriſtian Religion, by the Philoſophy of *Plato*, as it was modelled by *Virgil*, it became the fitter for Poetry. For *Virgil* ſaw, with an admirable Judgment, not only that the Reaſon muſt find its Account in Poetry, as well as the Paſſions and the Senſes, but that the Reaſon of Mankind, in the Time of *Auguſtus Cæſar*, when Moral Philoſophy got ground every Day in the World, would not be ſatisfied at ſo eaſy a Rate, as it was when *Homer* writ; or at leaſt, that it would not long be ſatisfied at ſo eaſy a Rate; which oblig'd him to model the *Grecian* Revelation, by the Philoſophy of *Plato*, and that got *Virgil* the Pre-eminence over *Homer*. For ſince the Deſign of every Art is to make Men happy, and that is the beſt and nobleſt Art, which makes the beſt Proviſion for the Happineſs of Mankind, and nothing can

make Man ſo happy as the reconciling him to himſelf, which can be no way ſo effectually done, as by making all the Faculties find their Satisfaction together; it follows, that that muſt be the nobleſt Poetry, where the Reaſon, the Paſſions and Senſes, are all of them pleas'd, and pleas'd in the higheſt Degree together. And, therefore, tho' we ſhould be oblig'd to grant what ſome will pretend with ſo much Obſtinacy, and which I can never believe, that the Paſſions and the Senſes find their Account in *Homer*, better than they do in *Virgil*, yet ſince they find their Account too in *Virgil*, in a very great Degree, and Reaſon at the ſame Time is ſatisfied, whereas it is horribly ſhock'd in *Homer*, by the Extravagance of his Theology; it follows, that *Virgil*, for that Reaſon, is certainly to be preferred to *Homer*; tho' this is to be ſaid in the behalf of the latter, that he writ to the People of his own Age, in which the Reaſon of Mankind was ſatisfy'd at an eaſier Rate.

And, therefore, when I ſay, that *Virgil* is to be preferr'd to *Homer*, I mean, that he is ſo in regard to us, becauſe he is capable of giving us a greater Pleaſure than *Homer*; but I do not pretend at the ſame Time, that *Virgil* is capable of giving us a greater Pleaſure than *Homer* gave his Contemporaries. As likewiſe when I affirm, that the Moderns, by joining Poetry with the True Religion, will have the Advantage of the Ancients,

I mean

I mean only in regard to us, to whom they will give a greater Pleaſure than the Ancients can do, but not a greater than the Ancients gave their Contemporaries. In ſhort, if *Virgil* was forc'd to model his *Grecian* Revelation by *Platoniſm*, that he might pleaſe more effectually even in his Time, when that Revelation as yet prevail'd; I think we may very well conclude, that in our Time we ought to fling it out of our Poetry, when it has been for ſo long Time utterly exploded, and contemn'd by the very Boys. Thus the *Grecian* Religion, and the Modern Poetry can agree but very indifferently, becauſe the Reaſon is ſhock'd by it. And if Reaſon is ſhock'd by the Religion which is join'd with the Poetry; by the Religion, I ſay, which gives the Force to the Paſſions, as we have ſhewn above; I would fain know, how the Paſſions can very well find their Account? I know indeed, very well, that a Poet, by the Force of a ſtrong Imagination, may enter into the *Grecian* Religion, when he ſets himſelf to write, and tranſport himſelf to the Age and Scene of his Action; and conſequently, may draw a great deal of Advantage from the Religion of that Country, and of that Age, in order to the being mov'd; and if the Poet is extremely mov'd himſelf, why they who read him muſt be mov'd in ſome meaſure too; but whether the Generality of Readers can be ſo very much mov'd, as if

the Paſſions deriv'd their Force from a Religion that is more familiar to them, I have a great deal of Reaſon to doubt: But if Reaſon cannot find its Account in the *Grecian* Religion, join'd with the Modern Poetry, much leſs would the Paſſions find their Satisfaction in Deiſm or the Ancient Philoſophy. The Chriſtian Religion alone, can ſupply a Poet with all that is ſublime and majeſtick in Reaſon; all that is either ſoft or powerful, either engaging or imperious in the Paſſions; and with all the Objects that are moſt admirable to the Senſes; and conſequently, moſt delightful; as ſhall be ſhewn at large in the following Chapter.

CHAP. II.

WE ſhew'd in the former Part of this Treatiſe, That the Ancients excell'd the Moderns in the Greatneſs of Poetry, becauſe they incorporated Poetry with Religion; and we pretended to ſhew in this Second Part, That by joining Poetry with the True Religion, the Moderns in the main will have the Advantage of the Ancients. In order to the proving which, we ſhew'd in the Firſt Chapter, That the Deſign of the Chriſtian Religion was agreeable to that of Poetry; whereas the Deſigns of Paganiſm

Paganiſm and Deiſm, and Philoſophy were not agreeable to it. We ſhew'd, that the true Deſign of Poetry, as well as of the Chriſtian Religion, was to pleaſe the Reaſon, the Paſſions and the Senſes at the ſame Time. For we ſhew'd in the former Part of this Treatiſe, that Paſſion, whether Ordinary or Enthuſiaſtick, is the principal Thing in Poetry; and nothing is more certain, than that the more the Senſes are ſtirr'd, and the more the Reaſon at the ſame Time is ſatisfied, the more ſtrongly, for the moſt Part, the Paſſions of Reaſonable Creatures are mov'd.

Now in this Chapter we pretend to ſhew, That the true Divine Poetry has the Advantage of the Pagan Poetry; that it ſatisfies the Reaſon more, at the ſame Time that it raiſes a ſtronger Paſſion, and that it entertains the Senſes, and eſpecially the Eye, more delightfully; and we pretend to give undeniable Inſtances of it, both from Sacred Writ, and from one of the Fathers, and from one of our own Poets.

There is certainly no Subject ſo great as the Power of God, and both *Homer* and *Virgil* have handled it to Admiration. The latter ſays of *Jupiter*, who preſided at the Council of the Gods, in the Tenth Book.

Tum pater omnipotens, rerum cui ſumma poteſtas,
Inſit, eo dicente, Deûm domus alta ſileſcit,
Et tremefacta ſolo tellus; ſilet arduus æther:
Tum Zephyri poſuere: premit placida æquora pontus.

And

And thus Mr. *Dryden* has made it *Engliſh.*

Then thus to both, reply'd th' Imperial God,
Who ſhakes Heav'n's Axles with his awful Nod:
When he begins, the ſilent Senate ſtand
With Reverence, liſt'ning to the dread Command;
The Clouds diſpel, the Winds their Breath reſtrain,
And the huſh'd Waves lie flatted on the Main.

But *Virgil* has handled this Subject ſtill after a greater Manner, in the firſt of the *Georgicks.* And that the Reader may have all the Force of it ſet before his Eyes, we ſhall ſhew how 'tis prepared, and begin a little before it.

Sæpe ego, cum flavis meſſorem induceret arvis
Agricola, & fragili jam ſtringeret hordea culmo,
Omnia ventorum concurrere prælia vidi;
Quæ gravidam latè ſegetem ab radicibus imis
Sublime expulſam eruerent: Ita turbine nigro
Ferret hiems culmumq; levem, ſtipulaſq; volantes.
Sæpe etiam immenſum cœlo venit agmen aquarum,
Et fædam glomerant tempeſtatem imbribus atris
Collectæ ex alto nubes: ruit arduus æther,
Et pluviâ ingenti ſata læta, boumque labores
Diluit: implentur foſſæ, & cava flumina creſcunt
Cum ſonitu, fervetque fretis ſpirantibus æquor.
Ipſe Pater, mediâ nimborum in nocte, coruſcâ
Fulmina molitur dextrâ: quo maxima motu
Terrâ tremit: fugêre feræ, & mortalia corda
Pergentes humilis ſtravit pavor. Ille flagranti

Aut

Aut Atho, aut Rhodopen, aut alta Ceraunia telo
Dejicit: ingeminant Auſtri, & denſiſſimus imber;
Nunc nemora ingenti vento, nunc litora plangunt.

And Mr. *Dryden* has made it *Engliſh* after ſo noble a Manner, that he has done all the Juſtice, that our Language would allow him, to the admirable Original.

Oft have I ſeen a ſudden Storm ariſe,
From all the warring Winds that ſweep the Skies:
The heavy Harveſt from the Root is torn,
And, whirl'd aloft, the lighter Stubble born;
With ſuch a Force, the flying Wreck is driv'n,
And ſuch a Winter wears the Face of Heav'n:
And oft whole Sheets deſcend of ſluicy Rain,
Suck'd by the ſpungy Clouds from off the Main:
The lofty Skies, at once, come pouring down,
The promis'd Crop and Golden Labours drown.
The Dykes are fill'd, and, with a roaring Sound,
The riſing Rivers float the nether Ground,
And Rocks the bellowing Voice of boiling Seas rebound.
The Father of the Gods his Glory ſhrowds,
Involv'd in Tempeſts, and a Night of Clouds,
And from the middle Darkneſs, flaſhing out,
By Fits he deals his fiery Bolts about.
Earth feels the Motions of her angry God,
Her Entrails tremble, and her Mountains nod,
And flying Beaſts in Foreſts ſeek Abode.
Deep Horror ſeizes every Human Breaſt,
Their Pride is humbled, and their Fear confeſt.

While

While He, from High, his rowling Thunder throws,
And fires the Mountains with repeated Blows,
The Rocks are from their old Foundations rent;
The Winds redouble, and the Rains augment;
The Waves on Heaps are daſh'd againſt the Shore,
And now the Woods, and now the Billows roar.

But now let us ſee how the *Pſalmiſt* has treated the ſame Subject in the Eighteenth *Pſalm*, and we ſhall find, that the Greatneſs of *Virgil* is Littleneſs compared to his.

6. *In my Diſtreſs I called upon the Lord, and cryed unto my God: He heard my Voice out of his Temple, and my Cry came before him, even into his Ears.*

7. *Then the Earth ſhook and trembled, the Foundations of the Hills alſo moved and were ſhaken, becauſe he was wroth.*

8. *There went up a Smoak out of his Noſtrils, and Fire out of his Mouth devoured; Coals were kindled by it.*

9. *He bowed the Heavens alſo, and came down, and Darkneſs was under his Feet.*

10. *And he rode upon a Cherub, and did fly: He came flying upon the Wings of the Winds.*

11. *He made Darkneſs his ſecret Place; His Pavilion round about him were dark Waters, and thick Clouds of the Skies.*

12. *At the Brightneſs that was before him, his Clouds remov'd Hail-ſtones and Coals of Fire.*

13. *The*

13. *The Lord alſo thundered in the Heavens, and the Higheſt gave his Voice Hailſtones and Coals of Fire.*

14. *Yea, he ſent forth his Arrows, and ſcattered them, and he ſhot out Lightnings, and diſcomfited them.*

15. *Then the Channels of Waters were ſeen, and the Foundations of the World were diſcovered, at thy Rebuke, O Lord, at the Blaſt of the Breath of thy Noſtrils.*

Now, in the firſt Place, Reaſon finds its Account better here than it does in *Virgil*; for the more amazing Effects that we ſee of Divine Diſpleaſure, the more it anſwers our Idea of infinite Wrath. But there is nothing that *Virgil* has ſaid upon this Subject, but what is much ſtronger in the *Pſalmiſt*; and there are ſeveral Things in the latter, which are by no means in *Virgil*. For Example, how much ſtronger is, *The Hills alſo moved, and were ſhaken, becauſe he was wroth*, than that of *Virgil*,

——— *Ille flagranti*
Aut Atho, aut Rhodopen, aut alta Ceraunia telo
Dejicit? ———

Which only ſignifies the Thunders rending the Tops of the Mountains; which any one may ſee is weak in Compariſon of what *David* ſays, That the very Mountains ſeem'd to have a Senſe of the Indignation of their Creator.

Creator. Mr. *Dryden* endeavour'd to add Strength to this Paſſage of *Virgil:*

Earth feels the Motions of its angry God,
Her Entrails tremble, and her Mountains nod.

But he, too, falls very much ſhort of the Force of the Pſalmiſt; for he makes the Trembling of the Earth, and the Nodding of the Mountains, to be only the natural neceſſary Effects of Mechanical Motion.

And that which ſatisfies the Reaſon the more here, raiſes the Paſſion more ſtrongly, and entertains the Senſes the better, becauſe there are more and more amazing Effects of the Divine Pleaſure. For how great, how lofty, how terrible, is that; *He bowed the Heavens and came down, and Darkneſs was under his Feet?* How much ſtronger than that of *Virgil, Ipſe pater,* &c.? And how Poetical, and how Dreadful is that, *Then the Channels of the Waters were ſeen, and the Foundations of the World were diſcovered; at thy Rebuke, O Lord, at the Blaſt of the Breath of thy Noſtrils?* How terribly is the Eye delighted here, which is a Senſe that the Poet ought chiefly to entertain; becauſe it contributes more than any other to the exciting of ſtrong Paſſion? And here I deſire the Reader to conſider, That there is more Terror here, both Ordinary and Enthuſiaſtick, and conſequently, more Spirit in a faint Copy, nay, a Proſaick Copy, tranſlated in

in the Imperfection of our Tongue, and by Men who, in all likelihood, had no manner of Notion of Poetry, than there is in *Virgil*'s Original. What Force, and what infinite Spirit muſt there not have been in the Original *Hebrew*? Since theſe are Thoughts that are ſo truly great, and ſo truly lofty, that they carry with them Spirit, and Force, and Fire, through whatever Head they paſs, and whatever Language, how admirable and inimitable muſt they not have been, in the Hands of that Divine Poet, who knew how to ſhew them to the utmoſt Advantage? The Character of *Buchanan* is by no means Elevation, but yet he is ſo exalted in this Deſcription, that he ſoars above *Virgil*, who is by Nature lofty.

Ille ſuper ſolio reſidens flammantis Olympi
Audiit orantem, poſtquam pervenit in altum
Clamor, & attentas advertit queſtibus aures.
Protinus è vultu Domini conterrita tellus
Intremuit, monteſque cava compage ſoluti
Nutarunt, penituſque imis fremuere cavernis,
Fumeus afflatu de naribus æſtus anhelo
Undabat: rapidæ contorto vertice flammæ
Ore fluunt, vivaque animant attacta fovilla.
Utq; ſuum Dominum terræ demittat in orbem
Leniter inclinat juſtum faſtigia cœlum
Succedunt pedibus fuſcæ caliginis umbræ.
Ille vehens curru volucri, cui flammeus, ales
Lora tenens, levibus ventorum ad remigat alis
Se circum furvo nebularum involuit amictu,

Præ-

Prætenditque cavas piceis in nubibus undas.
Acribus ex oculis vibratæ ſpicula, flammæ
Diſcutiunt triſtes claro fulgore tenebras.
Inde ruit crepitans lapidoſæ grandinis imber,
Diſcurſantque vagæ ſinuoſa volumina flammæ.
At vero ut ſancto ſermone ſilentia rupit,
Protinus horrifico tonitru cælum omne remugit:
Grandinis, & crebrâ tellus crepitante procella
Pulſa ſonat, ruptiſque micant è nubibus ignes.
Flamiferæque volant magnum per inane ſagittæ.
Fulguraque ingeminant; laticum concuſſa lacunas
Pandit hians tellus, & fontibus ora relaxat.
Succutiturque paveus, & fundamenta revelat
Et reſcrat chaos. Æterni ſic vox tonat oris,
Sic formidandæ grave ſpiritus infremit iræ.

Now how much ſtronger and more Poetical is,

Protinus è vultu Domini conterrita tellus
Intremuit, ———

Than that of *Virgil*,

——— *Quo maxima motu*
Terra tremit? ———

And how much weaker is,

——— *Ille flagranti*
Aut Atho, aut Rhodopen, aut alta Ceraunia telo
Dejicit; ———

Earth

Earth feels the Motions of her angry God,
Her Entrails tremble, and her Mountains nod:

How much weaker is this, I ſay, than

——— *Monteſque cava compage ſoluti*
Nutarunt, penituſque imis fremuere cavernis;

Where *Buchanan* ſhews the Mountains not only disjoynted with the terrible Fright, and ſhaken from their very Foundations; but every one of them roaring with Infernal Thunder, like *Mongivell* or *Veſuvius?* Beſides that, in this Paſſage of the *Pſalmiſt* every Thing is great, and every Thing is ſuſtain'd, whereas in that of the firſt *Georgick*, even the great *Virgil* forgets himſelf.

——— *Quo maxima motu*
Terra tremit; fugere feræ. ———

Earth feels the Motions of her angry God,
Her Entrails tremble, and her Mountains nod,
And flying Beaſts in Foreſts ſeek Abode.

How poorly does the laſt Verſe of the Triplet anſwer to the Greatneſs of the other Two?

But now, if any one pretends here, that *Virgil* is deſcribing only a common Storm, whereas *David* is deſcribing the extraordinary Indignation of God; to him I anſwer, That *Virgil*, to heighten that common

Storm, ſhews it to be the Effect of Divine Wrath, and Divine Wrath muſt at all Times be Infinite. But to ſhew the Invalidity of ſuch an Objection, I deſire any one to produce any Thing from the *Grecian* and *Roman* Poets upon the ſame Subject, that is any ways comparable to this Paſſage of the *Pſalmiſt*. For, as our Religion gives us more exalted Notions of the Power of an Infinite Being, than the Heathen Religion did to the *Grecian* and *Roman* Poets; it conſequently produces a ſtronger Spirit in Poetry, when it is managed by thoſe who have Souls that are capable of expreſſing it.

I could produce a hundred Paſſages more out of Sacred Writ, which are infinitely ſuperior to any Thing that can be brought upon the ſame Subject, from the *Grecian* and *Roman* Poets.

And the only Reaſon why I refuſe to do it, is becauſe it may be pretended, That the Writers in Sacred Writ, had the peculiar Advantage of Divine Inſpiration, and that no Conſequence can be drawn from them in the Behalf of the Moderns, who pretend not to the ſame Advantage. And, therefore, I ſhall produce ſome Inſtances of the Preeminence of the Chriſtian over the Pagan Poets; whoſe Authors cannot be pretended to have been Divinely aſſiſted, in a more peculiar manner, than any of the Moderns may be. The firſt Inſtance that I ſhall bring, ſhall be from the Hymn of St. *Ambroſe*, a Father

a Father of the Church, who lived in the Third Century; a Hymn more exalted than either *Orpheus*, or *Homer*, or *Callimachus* ever produced. I have given the former Part of it a Dreſs of my own; through the which, tho', perhaps, it may appear diſguis'd to the Reader, yet even through that Diſguiſe, he may diſcern a Greatneſs, and a Beauty, that are not every where to be found.

TE DEUM, &c.

We Praiſe thee, O GOD.

I.

A Long Adieu to mortal Lays,
Our Voice t' immortal Heights we raiſe,
And ſing the great Creator's Praiſe.
Thy Praiſe, O God, thy boundleſs Praiſe,
In more than Human Sounds we ſing,
O for an Angel's tow'ring Wing!
O! rather for thy Spirit to ſuſtain
Each matchleſs Strain!
That it may reach eternal Heights,
And in its lofty daring Flights,
The Heav'n of Heav'ns may ſcale!
Raiſe all your Voices, ſtrike your Strings,
'Tis GOD, 'Tis GOD we ſing!
Sound all, and cry with one Accord,
Hail, Thou ſupreme of Things!
The World's great Author, hail!
Hail, infinite eternal King!

Thee God, above all Heights ador'd,
We all confeſs, and all obey:
Proſtrate and low, and trembling all,
Before thy dreadful Majeſty we fall,
Acknowledging thy boundleſs Sway.

II.

Such Homage to their Eaſtern Kings,
The Indian *and the* Perſian *brings:*
But Eaſtern Kings, alas! to Thee,
Vain Fantoms are of Royalty;
That, with a falſe deluſive Pow'r,
Appear, and vaniſh in an Hour:
For Thee, what Homage ſhall we find,
Infinite Independant Mind?
What Homage worthy of the God,
That can unmake us with a Nod?
Look from Thy awful Throne on High,
And with Thy Omnipreſent Eye
Into our Souls Receſſes pry;
There ſee a Homage worthy Thee,
Worthy eternal Majeſty:
See profound Humility!
See Souls intirely mortify'd!
Down ſenſeleſs Vanity and Pride!
Vile as thou art, vain Man appear,
Behold Omnipotence is here!
When He, who only is, when He
Appears, what Worms, what Mites, are we!
Nay, we are not, we only ſeem,
We're ſcarce a Shadow, ſcarce a Dream.

A ſenſeleſs

A ſenſeleſs Dream of what is not,
That paſſes, and is ſtrait forgot.
Thou only art, for what Thou art,
Thou always wilt be, always wert.
For Thou art permanent and fix'd,
Uncreated and unmix'd:
The radiant Heav'ns and rowling Earth
Owe to Thee their wondrous Birth;
Thou of Ten thouſand Worlds art Lord,
And art by ev'ry World ador'd.
They all confeſs thy Pow'r Divine,
For Thee they move, for Thee they ſhine,
And ev'ry World's for ever Thine.

III. All the Earth doth Worſhip Thee, the Father everlaſting.

And this great Planet, Earth, which rowls
Inceſſantly around its Poles;
And 'till the End of Time muſt run
Its Giant Race about the Sun;
And moving round the Lamp of Day,
O'ertake the Seaſons in its Way;
While, ſlanting, in its oblique Flight,
It ſhortens or prolongs the Night;
Thee, Motion's Fountain, and its Source,
It worſhips in its endleſs Courſe;
Thee, while it turns about the Sphere,
Accompliſhing the mighty Tear;
Its great Creator, Thee, it ſerves,
And thy eternal Laws obſerves.
Creatures, to whom great Mother-Earth,
Fermented by thy Flame, gave Birth;

All that on Libyan *Mountains roar,*
Or flounder on the Indian *Shore;*
All that in Airy Caravans on high,
Intelligent of Seaſons, fly
Thro' the vaſt Deſerts of the Aerial Sky;
All to their Maker Adoration pay,
All conſtantly Thy ſeveral Laws obey,
Which their diſtinguiſh'd Tribes, and different Nations ſway.
Their Seaſons, pre-ordain'd by Thee, they know,
At Thy Command they come, at Thy Command they go.

IV.

None but, irregular Man, Thy rightful Sway,
Impious, irregular Man! dares diſobey;
Yet impious Man, too, Thee adores;
Thee from Cathaian *to* Peruvian *Shores,*
With nameleſs Rites, unnumber'd Tongues, he ev'ry Hour implores.
Before Thy Feet Earth's numerous Kingdoms all,
Before Thy Feet a Thouſand Monarchs fall,
And Thee their Everlaſting Father call.
And thus they cry, Thy potent Breath,
Our great Forefather call'd from more than Death:
When Thou ſaidſt, Let him be! *the Sound*
Drew him wondring from the Ground;
To Thee low the World's great Rulers bow;
Thou art our God, our mighty Maker Thou,
Thou formdſt us at the firſt, and Thou ſuſtain'ſt us now.

V. To

V. To Thee all Angels cry aloud.

Now let us Earth and Earthly Things diſdain;
Now let us ſing a loftier Strain;
Now let our Souls to Heav'n repair,
Direct their moſt aſpiring Flight
To Fields of uncreated Light,
And dare to draw Empyreal Air.
'Tis done! O Place divinely bright!
O Sons of God, divinely fair!
O Sight! unutterable Sight!
O unconceivable Delight!
O Joy, which only Gods can bear!
Hark! how their bliſsful Notes they raiſe,
And ſing the Eternal Maker's Praiſe!
How in extatick Song they cry,
Lo! we, the glorious Sons of Light,
So great, ſo beautiful, ſo bright!
Lo! we, the brighteſt of created Things,
Who are all Flame, all Force, all Spirit, and all Eye;
Are yet but vile and nothing in Thy Sight.
Before Thy Feet, O mighty KING *of Kings,*
O Maker of the boundleſs All!
Thus lowly, reverent, we fall.
Thou know'ſt how many of us fell
To loweſt Shame, and loweſt Hell:
But Thou art Holy, Thou, O Lord,
Art only fit to be implor'd,
Of Sacred Sabboth God ador'd!
And thus they paſs Eternity.
To Thee, all Angels in the Sky,
And all Archangels, loudly cry;

The mighty Cherubim,
Anſwers the flaming Seraphim.
Holy! continually they cry:
O Holy! Holy! Holy Lord!
Of Sacred Sabboth God ador'd!
From them Dominions catch the bliſsful Song,
And Thrones the glorious Fugue *prolong,*
Holy! continually they cry:
Th' harmonious Thunder rowls adown the Skies,
And to the Golden Orbs it flies.
The vaſt Intelligences, all on Fire
With flaming Zeal, compleat th' Immortal Quire;
To ſing Thee, Great Creator, all conſpire,
All Ranks divinely touch the living Lyre.
O Holy! Holy! Holy Lord!
Of Sacred Sabboth God ador'd!
Holy! th' Empyreal Spirits cry;
Holy! the Regents of the Orbs reply!
To the great Strain they tune their Spheres,
And raviſh ev'n Immortal Ears.
And all th' harmonious Worlds on high,
Accompany the Song Divine,
And in the eternal Chorus *join.*

VI.

Thus, Thee, they always worſhip, all,
Thee, God of Sacred Sabboth call,
[The Angels ſpeak.
For Thou haſt been of Holy Reſt,
From vaſt Eternity poſſeſt,
When all in yon created Maſs,
Does but appear, and move, and paſs.

All

All moves, all fluctuates without End,
But Spirits that on Thine depend.
Ton glorious Worlds that floating lye
In the profound Abyſs of Sky,
In Matter's ſtormy Gulphs are toſt,
Till in a flaming Wreck they're loſt.
We that ſo far with Angels Ken, can trace
Thy Godlike Works along the boundleſs Space,
See nought from endleſs Agitation free,
But Thee, the great, th' eternal Mover, Thee!
Ev'n we are mov'd, ev'n we are toſt,
In bliſsful Rapture almoſt loſt,
Ev'n we, ſometimes, almoſt complain
Of Tranſports that are near to Pain,
Which, without Thee, we never could ſuſtain:
Thou mov'ſt us All, yet, ever-bleſt,
Alone enjoy'ſt perpetual Reſt;
Thy great All-ſeeing Eyes ne'er ſleep,
And yet for everlaſting Days,
They Sabboth, ſacred Sabboth, keep,
The wondrous Subject of our Praiſe.
But who, tho' mounted on an Angel's Wing,
Can ever hope to raiſe his Flight
To ſuch a tow'ring, ſuch a godlike Height,
As Thee, with equal Song, to ſing?
Thee, God over all Worlds ſupreme;
Who muſt not flag beneath th' Almighty Theme?
Where-e'er, at utmoſt Stretch, we caſt our Eyes,
Thro' the vaſt frightful Spaces of the Skies,
Ev'n there we find thy Glory, there we gaze
On thy bright Majeſty's unbounded Blaze;
Ten thouſand Suns, prodigious Globes of Light,
At once, in broad Dimenſions, ſtrike our Sight.

Millions

Millions behind, in the remoter Skies,
Appear but Spangles to our wearied Eyes;
And when our wearied Eyes want farther Strength,
To pierce the Void's immeaſurable Length,
Our vigorous towring Thoughts ſtill farther fly,
And ſtill remoter flaming Worlds deſcry.
But ev'n an Angel's comprehenſive Thought
Connot extend ſo far as Thou haſt wrought.
Our vaſt Conceptions are, by Swelling, brought
(Swallow'd and loſt in Infinite) to nought.

The next Inſtance is from *Milton*, who in the Seventh Book of the *Paradiſe loſt*, has handled the Subject of the Creation better than either *Ovid*, or *Virgil* himſelf has done; tho' he is certainly above *Ovid* by the Force of his own Genius, as much as by the Advantage of his Religion: But 'tis by the latter only, that he excels *Virgil*, than whom I do not believe that any Man can have a greater Genius. When I ſay that *Milton* excels *Virgil*, I mean, that he does ſo ſometimes, both in his Thought, and in his Spirit, purely by the Advantage of his Religion. But at the ſame Time, I am very far from thinking, that he ſo much as equals him either in the continual Harmony of his Verſification, or the conſtant Beauty of his Expreſſion, or his perpetual Exaltation. He writ in a Language that was not capable of ſo much Beauty, or ſo much Harmony; and his Inequality proceeded from his want of Art to manage his Subject, and make it conſtantly great. For it would be

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an eaſy matter to prove that none of the Moderns underſtood the Art of Heroick Poetry, who writ before *Boſſu* took Pains to unravel the Myſtery. But nothing can make more for my Subject, than to ſhew that *Milton*, who lay under theſe vaſt Diſadvantages, very often excell'd, even the Prince of the *Roman* Poets, both in the Greatneſs of his Thought, and his Spirit.

But, firſt, let us ſee how he ſurpaſſes *Ovid*, in his Deſcription of *Chaos*, and the Creation of the World from *Chaos*. And in order to that, let us ſee the Account that the *Roman* gives of it, in the Beginning of his *Metamorphoſis*.

Ante mare & tellus, & quod tegit omnia cælum,
Unus erat toto naturæ vultus in orbe,
Quem dixêre Chaos, rudis indigeſtaque moles:
Nec quicquam, niſi pondus iners: congeſtaq; eodem
Non bene junctarum diſcordia ſemina rerum.
Nullus adhuc mundo præbebat lumina Titan;
Nec nova creſcendo reparabat cornua Phœbe,
Nec circumfuſo pendebat in aere tellus.
Ponderibus librata ſuis: nec brachia longo
Margine terrarum porrexerat Amphitrite,
Quâque fuit tellus, illic & pontus, & aer:
Sic erat inſtabilis tellus innabilis unda,
Lucis egens aer: nulli ſua forma manebat.
Obſtabatque aliis aliud, quia corpore in uno
Frigida pugnabant calidis, humentia ſiccis,
Mollia cum duris, ſine pondere habentia pondus.

And

And thus Mr. *Dryden* has tranſlated it, in the Beginning of the Third Miſcellany.

Before the Seas, and this Terreſtrial Ball,
And Heav'n's high Canopy, which covers all,
One was the Face of Nature, if a Face,
Rather a rude and indigeſted Maſs:
A lifeleſs Lump, unfaſhion'd and unfram'd,
Of jarring Seeds, and juſtly Chaos *nam'd.*
No Sun was lighted up the World to view,
No Moon did yet her blunted Horns renew,
Nor yet was Earth ſuſpended in the Sky,
Nor, pois'd, did on her own Foundations lie;
Nor Seas about the Shoar their Arms had thrown,
But Earth, and Air, and Water were in one.
Thus Air was void of Light, and Earth unſtable,
And Waters dark Abyſs unnavigable.
No certain Form on any was impreſt,
All were confus'd, and each diſturb'd the reſt;
For Hot and Cold were in one Body fixt,
And Soft with Hard, and Light with Heavy, mixt.

Let us examine *Milton*'s Deſcription of *Chaos* in the Second Book of *Paradiſe Loſt*, where he ſhews Satan, and Sin, and Death, taking a Survey of it from Hell's Gate.

Before their Eyes, in ſudden View, appear
The Secrets of the hoary Deep, a dark
Illimitable Ocean, without Bound,
Without Dimenſion; where Length, Breadth, and
Heighth,

And

And Time and Place are loſt; where eldeſt Night,
And Chaos, Anceſtors of Nature, hold
Eternal Anarchy, amidſt the Noiſe
Of endleſs Wars, and by Confuſion ſtand.
For Hot, Cold, Moiſt, and Dry, Four Champions fierce,
Strive here for Maſtery, and to Battel bring
Their Embryan Atoms; they around the Flag
Of each his Faction, in their ſeveral Clans,
Light-arm'd, or heavy, ſharp, ſmooth, ſwift, or ſlow,
Swarm populous, unnumber'd as the Sands
Of Barca, *or* Cyrene's *Torrid Soil.*
Levied to ſide with warring Winds, and poiſe
Their lighter Wings. To whom thoſe moſt adhere,
He rules a Moment; Chaos *Umpire ſits,*
And, by Deciſion, more imbroils the Fray,
By which he reigns.———

Now I leave it to any Reader to judge, who has never ſo little Diſcernment in theſe Affairs, which of theſe Deſcriptions is moſt fine, moſt figurative, and moſt poetical. But now let us ſee how *Ovid* begins his Account of the Creation.

Hanc Deus & melior litem natura diremit.
Nam cœlo terras, & terris abſcidit undas:
Et liquidum ſpiſſo ſecrevit ab aere cœlum.
Quæ poſtquam evolvit cæcoque exemit acervo,
Diſſociata locis concordi pace ligavit.
Ignea convexi vis & ſine pondere cœli
Emicuit,

Emicuit, ſummaque locum ſibi legit in arce,
Proximus eſt aer illi levitate locoque
Denſior his tellus; elementaque grandia traxit;
Et preſſa eſt gravitate ſui. Circumfluus humor,
Ultima poſſedit, ſolidumque coercuit orbem.

Aud thus Mr. *Dryden* has made it *Engliſh.*

But God or Nature, while they thus contend,
To theſe inteſtine Diſcords put an End:
Then Earth from Air, and Seas from Earth were driv'n,
And groſſer Air ſunk from Ætherial Heav'n.
Thus diſembroil'd, they take their proper Place,
The next of Kin contiguouſly embrace,
And Foes are ſunder'd by a larger Space.
The Force of Fire aſcended firſt on high,
And took its Dwelling in the vaulted Sky.
Then Air ſucceeds, in Lightneſs next to Fire,
Whoſe Atoms from unactive Earth retire.
Earth ſinks beneath, and draws a numerous Throng
Of pondrous, thick, unweildy Seeds along.
About her Coaſts unruly Waters roar,
And, riſing on a Ridge, inſult the Shoar.

But how poor is this Beginning compar'd to the pompous Preparative with which *Milton* uſhers in his Account of the ſame Thing, in the Seventh of his *Paradiſe loſt?*

———*Heav'n open'd wide*
Her ever during Gates, harmonious Sound

On

On Golden Hinges moving, to let forth
The King of Glory, in his pow'rful Word,
And Spirit, coming to create new Worlds.
On Heav'nly Ground they ſtood, and from the Shore
They view'd the vaſt immeaſurable Abyſs,
Outrageous as a Sea, dark, waſteful, wild,
Up from the Bottom turn'd by furious Winds
And ſurging Waves, as Mountains, to aſſault
Heav'ns Heighth, and with the Center mix the Pole.
Silence, ye troubled Waves, and thou, Deep, Peace,
Said then th' Omnifick Word, your Diſcord end,
Nor ſtaid, but on the Wings of Cherubim
Up-lifted, in paternal Glory rode
Far into Chaos, *and the World unborn.*
For Chaos *heard his Voice: Him, all his Train,*
Follow'd in bright Proceſſion, to behold
Creation, and the Wonders of his Might.

And 'tis plain, that *Milton* owes this Greatneſs, and this Elevation, to the Excellence of his Religion. How mean is

Ignea convexi vis & ſine pondere cæli
Emicuit, ſummaque locum ſiti legit in arce,

To *Milton*'s Deſcription of the firſt great *Fiat*?

Let there be Light, *ſaid God, and forthwith Light*
Ethereal, firſt of Things, Quinteſſence pure,
Sprung

Sprung from the Deep, and from her Native Eaſt,
To journey thro' the airy Gloom began,
Spher'd in a radiant Cloud.

How low is the Formation of Earth and Sea in *Ovid*, compar'd to *Milton*'s!

Principio terram, ne non æqualis ab omni
Parte foret, magni ſpeciem glomeravit in orbis.
Tum freta diffundi, rapidiſq; tumeſcere, ventis
Juſſit, & ambitæ circumdare litora terræ.
Juſſit & extendi campos, ſubſidere valles,
Fronde tegi ſylvas, lapidoſos ſurgere montes.

Thus, when the God, whatever God was he,
Had form'd the Whole, and made the Parts agree,
That no unequal Portions might be found,
He moulded Earth into a ſpacious Round:
Then, with a Breath, he gave the Winds to blow,
And bad the congregated Waters flow.
He ſhades the Woods, the Valleys he reſtrains
With Rocky Mountains, and extends the Plains.

Let us now ſee *Milton*'s Account of this.

The Earth was form'd; but in the Womb, as yet,
Of Waters, Embryon immature, involv'd,
Appear'd not; over all the Face of Earth
Main Ocean flow'd, not idle, but with warm
Prolifick Humour, ſoftening all her Globe,
Fermented the great Mother to conceive,
Satiate with Moiſture, when God ſaid,

Be

Be gather'd now, ye Waters, under Heav'n,
Into one Place, and let dry Land appear,
Immediately the Mountains huge appear
Emergent, and their broad bare Backs up heave
Into the Clouds, their Tops aſcend the Sky.

What an Image is here! and taken apparently from our Religion, which teaches us the moſt exalted Notions of God, and the immediate Obedience of the Creatures to their Creator. But *Milton* goes on, and at the ſame Time ſets before us another wonderful Sight.

So high as Heav'n the tumid Hills, ſo low
Down ſunk a hollow Bottom, broad and deep,
Capacious Bed of Waters.

He proceeds.

——*And God ſaid*, Let the Earth
Put forth the verdant Graſs, Herb yielding Seed,
And Fruit-tree yielding Fruit after her Kind.

Theſe Three Verſes are cold, and flat, and inharmonious, for there can be no true Harmony in Numbers without Paſſion; but let us ſee whether the Verſes that follow will make Amends for them.

He ſcarce had ſaid, when the bare Earth, 'till then
Deſart and bare, unſightly, unadorn'd,
Brought forth the tender Graſs, whoſe Verdure clad
Her univerſal Face with pleaſant Green.
Then Herbs of ev'ry Leaf that ſudden flowr'd,
Open'd their various Colours, and made gay
Her Boſom, ſmelling ſweet, and theſe ſcarce blown;
Forth flouriſh'd thick the cluſtring Vine; forth crept
The ſmelling Gourd; up ſtood the Corny Reed
Embattell'd in her Field; and th' humble Shrub,
And Buſh with frizled Hair implicit; laſt
Roſe, as in Dance, the ſtately Trees.——

What an Image is here again, with which none but our own Religion could have poſſibly ſupply'd him!

Let us now examine *Virgil*'s Account of the Beginning of the World in the Sixth Eclogue, and ſee if we can meet with any thing that may be compared to theſe Thoughts of *Milton*, which, at the ſame Time that they are wonderful, are ſimple, and are naturally produc'd by the Subject.

Namque canebat, uti magnum per inane coacta
Semina terrarumque animæque, mariſque fuiſſent,
Et liquidi ſimul ignis: ut his exordia primis
Omnia, & ipſe tener mundi concreverit orbis.
Tum durare ſolum, & diſcludere Nerea Ponto
Cæperit, & rerum paulatim ſumere formas,
Jamque novum ut terræ ſtupeant luceſcere Solem,
Altius atque cadant ſubmotis nubibus imbres:

Incipiant

Incipiant ſilvæ cum primum ſurgere, cumque
Rara per ignotos errent animalia montes.

Which by Mr. *Dryden* is thus tranſlated.

He ſung the ſecret Seeds of Nature's Frame,
How Seas, and Earth, and Air, and active Flame,
Fell thro' the mighty Void, and in their Fall
Were blindly gather'd in this goodly Ball.
The tender Soil, then ſtiffning by Degrees,
Shut from the bounded Earth, the bounding Seas.
Then Earth and Ocean various Forms diſcloſe,
And a new Sun, to the new World aroſe.
And Miſts, condens'd to Clouds, obſcure the Sky,
And Clouds diſſolv'd, the thirſty Ground ſupply.
The riſing Trees, the lofty Mountains grace,
The lofty Mountains feed the Savage Race,
But few, and Strangers, in th' unpeopled Place.

And now any one may ſee how much *Virgil*'s God is inferior to *Milton*'s Angel. 'Tis true, I know very well, that it may be urg'd in *Virgil*'s Behalf, That he does not pretend to ſet down *Silenus*'s Song, but only the principal Heads of it; whereas *Milton* makes the Angel *Raphael* give an Account at large of the Creation. I know this very well, I ſay; but I am ſatisfied at the ſame Time, that *Virgil* making *Silenus* proceed upon the *Epicurean* Hypotheſis, if he had given never ſo full and artful an Account of the Creation, could never poſſibly have equall'd

Milton; for that Hypotheſis runs directly counter to thoſe lofty Thoughts, and thoſe noble Images, which *Milton* has ſhewn in ſuch wondrous Motion. For theſe Verſes,

Tum durare ſolum, & diſcludere Nerea Ponto
Cæperit, & rerum paulatim ſumere formas;

And this,

Rara per ignotos errent animalia montes,

Are directly contradictory of thoſe noble Images, which we find in the following Account of *Milton*.

The Sixth, and of Creation laſt, aroſe,
With ev'ning Harps and Mattin, when God ſaid,
Let th' Earth bring forth Fruit living in her Kind,
Cattle, and creeping Things, and Beaſt of th' Earth,
Each in their Kind.———

Here are Four flat unmuſical Verſes again; but thoſe which follow, will more than make Amends for them.

———*The Earth obey'd, and ſtrait*
Op'ning her fertile Womb, teem'd at a Birth
Innumerous living Creatures, perfect Forms,
Limb'd and full grown: Out of the Ground up roſe,
As

As from his Laire, the wild Beaſt, where he wonns
In Foreſt wild, in Thicket, Brake or Den.
Among the Trees in Pairs they roſe, they walk'd,
The Cattle in the Fields and Meadows green;
Thoſe rare and ſolitary; theſe in Flocks,
Paſturing at once; and in broad Herds up ſprung
The graſſy Clods now calv'd: Now half appear'd
The tawny Lyon, pawing to get free
His hinder Parts, then ſprings, as broke from Bonds,
And rampant ſhakes his brinded Mane: The Ounce,
The Libbard and the Tyger, as the Mole,
Riſing, the crumbling Earth about them threw
In Hillocks; the ſwift Stag from under Ground
Bore up his branching Head; ſcarce from his Mold
Behemoth, *biggeſt born of Earth, up heav'd*
His Vaſtneſs.———

What a Number of admirable Images are here crouding upon one another? So natural and peculiar to the Subject, that they would have been as abſurd and extravagant in any other, as they are wonderfully juſt in this. And yet, even in this Subject, nothing could have ſupplied a Poet with them, but ſo Divine a Religion. So that at the ſame Time that the Eye is raviſhingly entertain'd, Admiration is rais'd to a Height, and the Reaſon is ſupremely ſatisfied. For are not theſe Effects that are worthy of an infinite Cauſe? Can any thing be more ſurprizingly ſtrong, than this energetick Image?

——Now Half appear'd
The tawny Lyon, pawing to get free
His hinder Parts, then ſprings, as broke from Bonds,
And rampant ſhakes his brinded Mane.

Is not the following one great and wonderful?

——The Ounce,
The Libbard and the Tyger, as the Mole,
Riſing, the crumbling Earth about them threw
In Hillocks.

And how admirable is the next!

——The ſwift Stag from under Ground
Bore up his branching Head.

He began to riſe even before he was finiſh'd, and his Horns were finiſh'd in riſing.

I thought to have proceeded, and to have compar'd the Councils and Fights of *Virgil* and *Milton*; and above all, their Deſcription of Hell and its Torments; in which both thoſe great Poets ſeem to have exerted all their Strength. But I am afraid I have already run into Length, and there is Matter remaining for an intire Volume.

And thus I have endeavoured to ſhew in the former Part of this Book, that the principal

cipal Reaſon why the ancient Poets excell'd the Moderns in the Greatneſs of Poetry, was, Becauſe they incorporated Poetry with Religion; and in the Second Part, That the Moderns, by joining the Chriſtian Religion with Poetry, will have the Advantage of the Ancients; that is, That they will have the Aſſiſtance of a Religion that is more agreeable to the Deſign of Poetry, than the *Grecian* Religion.

RINALDO *and* ARMIDA:

A

TRAGEDY:

As it is ACTED, at the

THEATRE

IN

Little Lincoln's-Inn Fields.

Written by Mr. DENNIS.

——— *Falſis Terroribus implet,*
Ut Magus. ——— Hor. Ep.

LONDON:
Printed in the Year *M.DCC.XXV.*

To HIS GRACE

THE

Duke of ORMONDE.

My LORD,

THE World has not been diſpleas'd to ſee in *Rinaldo*, a Character Reſembling Your Grace's; a Character of a Hero, who neither Rants nor Whines, but is Great, with a ſolid and real Greatneſs, very Valiant without Extravagance, and very Humane without Weakneſs, and deſerting Pleaſure for Glory. And that Character naturally claims Your Protection, which, reſembling Yours, has pleas'd all ſorts of People:

For

DEDICATION.

For Your Grace, at the ſame Time that You have been the Darling of the Fair, has been the Paſſion of the Brave, and the Eſteem of the Wiſe. The Univerſity of *Oxford* is proud of ſuch a Chancellor, and the Armies of the King of ſuch a Lieutenant General. All who are engag'd in the Cauſe of Truth, whether they defend her by Force or Argument, are animated and excited by having Your Grace at the Head of them. But at the ſame Time that You have been the Darling of the Fair, and the Eſteem of the Wiſe, the Largeneſs of Your Soul, and the Height of Your Courage, the Love of Your Country, and the Love of Glory, have made You almoſt the Adoration of the Armies. Whenever You were Encamp'd, the old Officers beheld, with Wonder, in You a double Portion of the Greatneſs of Soul of the Noble Duke of *Ormond*, Your Grandfather. And whenever You were engag'd in the Field, the

old

old animated Soldiers reviewed with Raviſhment, the Heroick Courage of Your Father, the Brave Earl of *Oſſory*. I muſt confeſs, my Lord, the Commendation of any Man's Anceſtors, is, for the moſt Part, a ſuperficial and a foreign Praiſe; But to ſhew the High Eſteem that we have of Yours, is to ſhew the Value that we have for Your Grace. I admire, indeed, the old Noble Duke of *Ormond*, and the Brave Earl of *Oſſory*, but I admire them moſt in Your Grace. For the Blood of Your Illuſtrious Family, like the Flood of a noble River, becomes more Great, and more Auguſt, the farther it deſcends from its Source.

The Earl of *Oſſory* did as much as Man could do at *Mons*, and Succeſs attended his Actions. Your Grace deſerv'd to be Victorious at *Landen*, but Fortune would not have it ſo. But 'tis eaſy, my Lord, to look great in Proſperity; To be great in Adverſity, that is the Work.

Work. Your Grace, in Yours, appear'd ſo exalted to Your Enemies, that they almoſt condemn'd that Fortune which had declar'd for them, and bluſh'd, in their Captive, to behold their Superior. I am afraid that I have gone too far, while I have endeavour'd to pleaſe; For to ſhew that I am ſenſible of Your extraordinary Merit, cannot but be pleaſing to all the World but Your Grace: But to ſhew that I had rather have Your Approbation than that of the World, I here reſtrain the Paſſion which I have to proceed, and ſubſcribe myſelf,

My LORD,

Your Grace's moſt Obedient Servant, and moſt Humble Admirer,

JOHN DENNIS.

THE PREFACE.

THE *Prologue to this Play, is a ſort of Preface to it; yet, becauſe Proſe ſeems to be more adapted to Criticiſm than Verſe, I deſire the Reader's Leave to ſay ſomething more largely of Things which were mentioned there. I had only the Hint of* Rinaldo's *Character from* Taſſo, *but the Character is my own. And if any one objects, That by differing from* Taſſo, *I offend in this Character, againſt the Reſemblance of the Manners; to him I anſwer, That the Manners of* Rinaldo *in* Taſſo, *being unequal, they are conſequently not well mark'd, and that, by Conſequence, there can be no Character. I was therefore at Liberty to form a Character from* Taſſo's *Hint, the moſt agreeable to my Subject that I could.*

I de-

I deſign'd Rinaldo, *then, neither a Languiſhing nor a Brutal* Hero; *he is fond of* Armida *to the laſt degree, and yet reſolves to leave her; but owes that Reſolution to the Strength of his Reaſon, and not the Weakneſs of his Paſſion. And as he reſolves to leave her, out of a Senſe of his Duty and Honour, and not any Levity or Barbarity of Nature; ſo upon their meeting in the Fourth Act, he demurrs upon executing that Reſolution, neither through Fear, nor any tender Infirmity, but ſomething that happen'd, which ſeem'd to require it from his Goodneſs, and his Humanity.*

For Armida, *ſome Gentlemen who have read* Taſſo, *may expect to ſee that wanton, alluring, delicious Creature, who appears in the Fourth Canto of the* Gieruſalemme, *with all that's tempting in Art; but I deſire thoſe Gentlemen to conſider, That in that Canto ſhe only appears in Maſquerade, and acts a Part at the Requeſt of her Unkle;*

Fa manto del vero ala Menzogna;

Making uſe of Artifices that were contrary to her Nature, in order to the ſeducing the Heroes of Godfrey's *Army. The Poet gives her true Character, in the* 38*th* Stanza, *of the* 16*th* Canto *of that Poem.*

E coſi pari al faſto hebbe lo ſdegno
Ch' amo d' eſſer Amata, odiò gli amanti.

She

She is by Nature a Proud and a Diſdainful Beauty, proud of her Triumphs, yet diſdaining the Slaves which adorn'd them, and ſo much the more violent in the Love ſhe bore to Rinaldo, *becauſe he was the only Perſon who had touch'd her Soul with Tenderneſs. And therefore, I was oblig'd to ſhew her, as the Nature of her Character, and of my Subject, requir'd. I ſay not this to arraign* Taſſo, *who is certainly one of the Greateſt of Modern Poets; but to defend myſelf: for I leave it to any Man of Senſe to judge, Whether Affectation be becoming of a Poem which ought only to expreſs Nature? Or the little Arts of a Filt, of the Gravity, and Severity, and Majeſty of the Tragick Muſe?*

But now 'tis Time to anſwer an Objection. There is, ſay ſome Gentlemen, a Softneſs that is natural to Love, and only that Softneſs, ſay they, ſhould be capable of engaging Rinaldo's *Heart; for 'tis hard to conceive, ſay they, how ſuch a Hero ſhould be paſſionately fond of a Woman, who appears always, either in a furious Diſorder, or uſing of horrible Incantations.*

To this I anſwer, That the Action of the Play begins, but between Three and Four Hours before the Death of Armida; *That, before that, the Lovers had been Three Months together in the Enchanted Iſland, where ſhe had entertain'd him with all that is Soft and Engaging in Art and Nature; That the Fury of her Diſorder began but an Hour before the Beginning of the Action of the Play, from*

a Hint which one of her Spirits had given her of the approaching Danger. All this will appear to the diſcerning Reader from the Play itſelf, who then may, perhaps, be inclin'd to believe, That I have had a little Diſcretion in my Conduct, and that I have taken up the Story, in that very Part of it, which alone is proper for Tragedy.

The Action is very Great and Important; upon the laſt Event of it depends the Succeſs of the moſt happy, and moſt glorious Croiſade, in which ever the Chriſtians engaged againſt the Infidels. Godfrey's *Army had beleaguer'd* Jeruſalem, *which, according to the Fable, could not poſſibly be taken till* Rinaldo *was return'd, and had cut down the Enchanted* Grove. *As the Action is Great, the Characters are Illuſtrious, and the Scene is Extraordinary. All the Objects that appear to the Agents, are almoſt intirely new; ev'ry Thing they ſee in Nature, being wonderful and ſurpriſing; every Thing that they ſee in Art, being terrible and aſtoniſhing.*

I reſolv'd therefore, to do my Endeavour to treat this Subject, with ſomething at leaſt, of that Sublime at once and Pathetick Air, which reigns in the renown'd Sophocles. *I reſolv'd to uſe ſome Effort to make the Greatneſs of the Sentiments, and of the Images, anſwer to the Height of the Subject; and the Dignity of the Expreſſion, to the Greatneſs of the Sentiments. I deſign'd in this Poem, to make Terror the prevailing Paſſion, which*

is

is likewiſe the predominant Paſſion in that admirable Grecian.

The Action is not only regular in the Mechaniſm (the Incidents falling, without any Reſtraint, into the narrow Compaſs of the Repreſentation) but decent too, I hope, in the Conduct of it; and (to the Reſerve of the Machines to which the Neceſſity of the Subject oblig'd me) reaſonable.

I have endeavour'd to ſhew as much Addreſs as I could in the Management of it. The Firſt Act but juſt opens the Deſign, and juſt ſhews Armida *in ſuch a Light, as was likelieſt to prepoſſeſs an Audience in her Favour, and make them eſpouſe her Intereſts. As ſoon as I had done that, by the Mouth of* Uarnia, *I thought fit to oblige her to break off the Narration, according to that important Precept of* Horace.

Ordinis hæc virtus erit & Venus aut ego fallor,
Ut jam nunc dicat, jam nunc debentia dici,
Pleraq; differat & præſens in tempus omittat.

Armida *reſumes and continues the Narration in the Second Act, and by diſplaying the Grounds of her Jealouſy, ſhews the fundamental Qualities of* Rinaldo's *Character, and her own; the Greatneſs of her Mind, the Pride of her Soul, the Violence of her Temper, and the Height of her Paſſion; and prepares what ſhe ſays and does in the Fourth Act, as* Pheniſſa, *by endeavouring in this Second Act, to bring* Armida *off from her Paſ-*

ſion, lays the Foundation of, and prepares the Cataſtrophe.

It may now, perhaps, be expected, that I ſhould ſay ſomething in the Defence of the Cataſtrophe. *But the Objection againſt that being almoſt univerſal, I ſhould be unpardonably preſumptuous, if I ſhould imagine that I could be in the Right, againſt the Conſent of ſo many Illuſtrious Aſſemblies as compoſed the Audiences of this Tragedy. All that I ſhall ſay in my Defence is this, That, perhaps, I may one Day retrench that which diſpleas'd them, and that I ſhall be a little more cautious the next Time I am to entertain them.*

PROLOGUE.

SINCE what is New, will likelieſt entertain you,
With a new Prologue firſt, we'll ſtrive to gain you.
The Prologue's ſo intirely new to Day,
It ne'er can ſerve for any other Play.
Then, all you Sparks who have to Paris rid,
And there heard Lully's Muſical Armide;
And ye too, who at Home have Taſſo read,
This, in Precaution to you, muſt be ſaid;
Armida's Picture we from Taſſo drew,
And yet it may reſembling ſeem to few;
For here you ſee no ſoft bewitching Dame,
Uſing Incentives to the Amorous Game,
And with affected, Meretricious Arts,
Secretly ſliding into Hero's Hearts.
That was an Error in th' Italian Muſe,
If the great Taſſo we're allow'd t' accuſe;
And to deſcend to ſuch enervate Strains,
The Tragick Muſe, with Majeſty, diſdains.
The great Torquato's Heroine ſhall appear,
But Proud, Fierce, Stormy, terribly Severe,
Such as th' Italian has Armida ſhown,
When by the World's Diſorder, ſhe'd revenge her own.
To change Rinaldo's Manners, we had Ground,
Who in th' Italian is unequal found.
At firſt he burns with fierce Ambition's Fire,
Anon he dotes like any feeble 'Squire,
The meer Reverſe of all that's noble in Deſire.
Then, in a Moment, leaves the Loveſick Dame,
And only Burns, and only Bleeds for everlaſting Fame.
In a juſt Play, ſuch Heroes ne'er have Part,
For all that offends Nature, offends Art.
What we have Chang'd, we leave to you to ſcan,
Yet judge with all the Candor that you can;
So ſhall your Pleaſure be the Writer's Care,
Who for it neither Time nor Thought will ſpare;
Which were not wanting now, to give this Play its Due,
To make it truly great, and truly worthy You.

Dramatis Perſonæ.

Rinaldo	*Mr.* Betterton.
Ubaldo	*Mr.* Thurman.
Carlo	*Mr.* Scudamore.
Armida	*Mrs.* Barry.
Urania	*Mrs.* Boman.
Pheniſſa	*Mrs.* Lee.

Aerial, Terreſtrial, and Infernal Spirits.

SCENE, The Top of a Mountain in the *CANARIES*.

RINALDO

AND

ARMIDA.

ACT I.

SCENE, *A delightful Wilderneſs on the Top of a Mountain in the* Canaries. *Overture with Trumpets.*

Enter *Urania*, *Ubaldo*, and *Carlo.*

UBALDO.

THUS Heav'n declares th' Importance of our Enterprize,
While Angels their Ætherial Trumpets ſound,
To animate us in our glorious March.

Uran. At length the Labours of that March are o'er,
At length the Sharpneſs of th' Aſcent is conquer'd;

And we, thro' Ways untractably abrupt,
Have reach'd this towring Summit of the Mountain,
Where never Mortal yet, by Mortal Force,
Was known t' aſcend, from whoſe commanding Height
At once Two Worlds lie ſubject to our View.
Ubald. By its tranſcendent Beauty and its Height,
This ſure muſt be the Paradiſe of Nature.
O Bleſs'd Retreat! O Fields belov'd by Heav'n!
O Iſland juſtly call'd the *Fortunate*,
And with high Reaſon, by the Ancients thought
Th' *Elyſian* Seat of happy Heroes Souls!
Carl. But, O amazing Height!
At what remote, and what ſtupendous Diſtance,
Yon tyrannizing Main below,
Inſults the ſoaming Shore!
Ubaldo, ſee how very far beneath us,
With flagging Wings, the painted Meteors fly
Thro' all th' infernal Regions of the Air!
How far below, illuſtrious in its Flight,
The nimble Lightning ſcow'rs along the Sky!
And, hark! how far, how very far beneath us,
Th' exaſperated Thunder roars,
To plague the guilty World!
Ura. But never Storm diſturbs this happy Place,
The very Pride and Pomp of wanton Nature,
The very Darling of indulgent Heaven;

Which

Which ſtill the Sun, the World's great Eye, contemplates,
And never ſuffers interpoſing Cloud
To bar th' Eternal Proſpect: 'Tis a Scene
Not unbecoming of the glorious Action,
Which Heav'n's Almighty Will has choſen you
Its Miniſters t' accompliſh; To this Place
Armida's Magick Pow'r conveyed *Rinaldo*.
Here the great Champion of the Chriſtian Faith
Lies languiſhing, and half diſſolv'd in Love.
The Terror of the unbelieving World,
And of thy proud Oppreſſors, O *Jeruſalem!*
Is here become an impious Woman's Slave!
A Woman, who, like *Lucifer* of old,
Of all the Angels of her Sex, created
The brighteſt, and the neareſt to Divinity,
Is fall'n, and loſt by her exceſſive Pride:
And, not contented with her Native Charms,
Holds guilty Commerce with infernal Spirits.
Here, in th' Embraces of his young Enchantreſs,
The blooming Hero paſſes all his Days,
And his luxurious Nights in wanton Joys,
As wanton as the Wings of *Weſtern* Winds,
Whoſe ſpicy Breaths, throughout theſe flowry Plains
Maintain Eternal Spring. Him you muſt free,
Or thou muſt ſtill b' enthrall'd, O ſacred City!
For on *Rinaldo*'s Conquering Sword
Thy Deſtiny depends.

Carl.

Carl. The very Place aſſiſts us in the Action,
The very Place inſpires magnanimous Thoughts;
As, by the Help of ſo ſublime a Station,
Here on the Frontiers of the rowling Skies,
We ſtand and breathe, the Borderers of Heaven;
So it exalts our very Souls, and lifts them
As far above the Level of Mankind,
As here we walk above th' inferior World.

Ura. So had it need, for Dangers are t' enſue,
Enough to ſhake the Conſtancy of Martyrs,
And move the bleſt Inhabitants of Heav'n.

Carl. What greater Dangers can enſue,
Than what, in reaching hither, we ſurmounted?
For, have we not, by Heaven's ſupreme Decree,
Tranſgreſs'd the Bounds eſtabliſh'd by *Alcides*?
Have we not inſolently dar'd to plow
The World's uncultivated Waſte, the Ocean,
And dauntleſly explor'd its dreadful Wonders?
And, in aſcending this Ætherial Mountain,
Stood firm againſt the fierce Aſſaults of Hell,
Repell'd more Monſters, than *Alcides* vanquiſh'd,
And baffled Furies, who, in horrid Shapes,
With ſtormy Rage, oppos'd our ſteep Aſcent?
And can we now be capable of Fear,
In the great Cauſe of Heaven! And in a Place
Intended for Delight, and not for Terror?

Ura.

Ura. But yet remember, *Carlo*, that *Alcides*,
Who ſubdu'd Monſters, triumph'd over Hell,
Nay, and ſupported Heaven, became a Slave
To Pleaſure.

Ubal. Things terrible, are Enemies to Nature, *Carlo*,
Declar'd and open Enemies,
And all that's Great and Noble in that Nature,
At their Approach, ſtill rouzes to reſiſt them.
But Pleaſure, though its ſecret Foe,
At leaſt appears its Friend.

Carl. Hark! What enchanting Sound ſalutes my Ear? *Muſick.*

Ura. Ay, now the dangerous Conflict muſt begin!
For in this Moment Hell begins th' Attack:
For, know, thou hear'ſt no human Sounds; the Skill
Of all that's exquiſite in mortal Man,
Could ne'er produce ſuch Harmony, the Work
Of Spirits, which uſurp th' Ætherial Air,
Who formerly enjoy'd ſublimer Stations,
And ſo Divinely touch'd Empyreal Lyres,
As pleas'd, ev'n Him who turns th' harmonious Spheres,
And ſweetly tunes the Univerſe. But ſee
[*The Enchanted Palace riſes to Muſick.*
How yonder Fabrick, like a Meteor, riſes,
Advancing thro' the Skies its pompous Front,
To this inchanting Symphony.

Car. Hark! Voices in the Air.

A SONG

A SONG by the *SPIRITS* in the Air.

[*Lofty Muſick.*

YE mighty Powers, who rule the Air,
Ye God who in the Ocean dwell,
And Ye, who at the Center, govern Hell,
Hither, at great Armida's *Call, repair;*
And while by your Command theſe Tow'rs ariſe,
'Till with unequall'd Pomp and State,
Their ſoaring Heads ſalute the Skies,
Shew thoſe above, that Hell, too, can create.

Ubald. But why, O ſacred Miniſter of Heaven!
Juſt at this Juncture, does this Fabrick riſe?
Ura. Know, to this Hour, *Rinaldo* and *Armida*
Have looſely revell'd in enchanted Wilds,
And wanton'd in the open Face of Heav'n.
But now th' Enchantreſs, who ſuſpects his Conſtancy,
Has, to ſecure him, by th' Advice of Hell,
Rais'd this Majeſtick Structure.
Ubald. But can the Hero of our Age, *Rinaldo,*
The Champion of the Chriſtian Cauſe, *Rinaldo,*
Deſcend to love a Sorcereſs?
Ura. No, not a Sorcereſs; *Rinaldo* loves
The Beauty, not th' Enchantreſs; He loves

The

The Maſter-piece of Heav'n, not that of Hell,
The moſt accompliſh'd Work of the Creator;
One who both ſpeaks and looks above a Woman,
Whom Heaven deſign'd, with more peculiar Care,
A whole vaſt Species in one ſingle Perſon;
And an Idea of ſublimer Beauty,
Than that with which the Lovelieſt of our Sex
Inſnare and captivate the Souls of Men.

Carl. She is, indeed, a Wonder.

Ura. A Beauty, in the Prime of her Perfection,
On whom, ſcarce Twenty blooming *Eaſtern* Springs
Have ſhed their ſweeteſt Influence;
Not an *Aſiatick* Monarch, but adores her:
But *Eaſtern* Kings are ſoft as is their Climate.
Have you forgot the Time when this *Armida*,
Leaving her Uncle's Kingdom of *Damaſcus*,
With a diſſembled Diſcontent, approach'd the Chriſtian Camp,
On the Pretence of asking Aid
Againſt th' Oppreſſion of a Tyrant's Power?

Ubal. That curs'd Deſign we never ſhall forget,
Which was to weaken and deſtroy the Army,
By drawing all our braveſt Warriors after her.

Ura. Tell me one Hero of you all, whoſe Virtue,
And whoſe Religion, did not melt at Sight
Of this triumphant Beauty? Nay, and melt,

Ev'n

Ev'n as you ſtood upon the ſacred Ground,
Where, for your Luſts, a God expir'd in Torments:
Have you ſo ſoon forgot this?
Ubal. Our Bluſhes ſay, We have not.
Ura. The very rude *Plebeians* of the Camp,
By habitual Hardſhip, mortify'd to Pleaſure,
By Sanguinary Deeds, inur'd to Cruelty,
Gaz'd all the Fierceneſs of their Souls away,
And at that Sight diſſolv'd in ſoft Deſire;
Thoſe brave Adventurers, whom their fervent Zeal,
The flaming Love of Everlaſting Glory,
Engag'd the noble voluntary Champions
Of this renown'd Croiſade, Heav'n's darling Cauſe,
Disbanded all, with ſhameful Stealth, by Night,
And left the Field, their Glory, and their God,
To follow this enchanting Fair; of all,
Only *Rinaldo* ſtill remain'd invincible:
But I want Time to ſay the reſt ——
E'er yet approaching Night uſurps the World,
Both thou and *Carlo*, muſt once more behold her,
And in a Cloud, with me, converſe before her,
Unmov'd, unſeen, unheard, unthought of by her,
Such is the Will of the Moſt High; but, hark!
More Harmony, and this Way it approaches.
Carl. And ſee the happy Natives of the Place,

Ura.

Ura. Theſe are, by Heav'n's Permiſſion,
come to try you,
And with ſoft Sounds ſeduce your Souls to
Pleaſure.
Now ſtand upon your ſtrongeſt Guards.

Spirits in the Shapes of Shepherds and Nymphs.

Shep. *Welcome to theſe lovely Plains,*
The happy Seats of bliſsful Swains.
Nym. *Welcome to theſe bliſsful Shades,*
The ſoft Retreats of happy Maids.
Shep. *Here we feel no Want nor Care,*
And no Inclemency of Air,
And Lovers never here deſpair.
Shep. *Sorrow ever from us flies,*
Pleaſure revels in our Eyes.
If we paſs an Hour in Courting,
'Tis for more delicious Sporting,
Never cruel Nymph denies.
Nym. *If any thing like Sorrow's ſeen*
In our Voice, or in our Mien,
'Tis not Grief that gives the Anguiſh,
'Tis with Pleaſure that we languiſh;
And if ever Nymph denies,
'Tis like one in Love who's wiſe;
'Tis like one who would invite
To more delicate Delight,
'Tis with wiſhing, dying Eyes.
Cho. *All about us, and above,*
Gaiety and Love inſpires;
All about us, and above,

Infuſes

Infuſes Tenderneſs and Love,
And wanton fine Deſires.

Shep. *The Jolly Breeze,*
That comes whiſtling through the Trees,
From all the bliſsful Region brings
Perfumes upon its ſpicy Wings,
With its wanton Motion curling.
The Cryſtal Rills,
Which down the Hills
Run o'er golden Gravel, purling.

Nym. *All around Venereal Turtles*
Cooing, Billing, on the Myrtles;
The more they ſhew their Amorous Trouble,
More fiercely dart their piercing Kiſſes,
And more eagerly redouble
The Raptures of their murmuring Bliſſes.

Ura. Enough, ye Miniſters of Hell, be gone,
Behold the waving of this potent Wand,
Whoſe Sight can make the fierceſt of you tremble,
And whoſe leaſt Touch can, with Ten thouſand Plagues,
Transfix your howling Furies; hence, take hence,
Your lying Forms, the mimick Shapes of Men.
Or, by th' unutterable Name——they vaniſh!
Now, Heroes, I obſerv'd you well, and find,
That you unmov'd have paſt a dangerous Tryal
And gain'd a glorious Conqueſt o'er yourſelves.

Ubal.

Ubal. Let us, advancing, our Succeſs purſue,
They who themſelves o'ercome, can Hell ſubdue.

Ura. Then, as we move tow'rds yonder magick Tow'rs,
Protect us in our March, ye Guardian Powers;
Y' immortal Miniſters, to whom, by Heav'n,
The Care and Charge of this great Action's giv'n,
Defend us from Hell's terrible Alarms,
And guard our Hearts from Pleaſure's fatal Charms;
Ye Angels, ſtrike your everlaſting Lyres,
Sound, ſound the lofty Trumpet, which inſpires
Th' exalted Soul with your Cœleſtial Fires.

The END *of the Firſt* ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE, *The Inſide of the Enchanted PALACE.*

Enter *Pheniſſa*, *Niſroe*; *Rinaldo* ſleeping on a Couch.

PHENISSA.

SLeeps he ſecure? And is the Queen obey'd?
Tho' here's a magick Symphony might lull
The raving Furies into ſoft Repoſe.
Niſ. There he lies, buried in eternal Sleep,
Unleſs myſelf, or ſome more pow'rful Spirit,
Unbind and rouze him from his Iron Slumber.
Thrice, while I mutter'd myſtick Sounds, I ſprinkled
His Temples with the drowſy, deadly Dew,
Bruſh'd by th' infernal Ravens baleful Wing
From the black Poppies, which on *Lethe* grow.
How fares *Armida?*
Phen. She dotes, alas! She dotes on this *Rinaldo*,
Her Love, and Fear of loſing what ſhe loves,
Diſquiet her, ſometimes, almoſt to Madneſs,
Thou

Thou know'ſt the Greatneſs of her Soul; from whence
Conclude how this tempeſtuous Flame muſt ſhake her;
Alas! I pity her.
Niſ. I cannot blame thee.
Ev'n I, who, for theſe long Six thouſand Years,
Have never felt one Motion like Remorſe,
I, were I not a Devil, I ſhould pity her;
The faireſt Creature which, on this Side Heav'n,
My Eyes have e'er beheld.
Phen. Say, what Succeſs attends this deſperate Love?
Niſ. Alas! I dare not; for remember *Ramiel*,
Who, but for barely hinting at her Fate,
Lies howling at the Bottom of th' Abyſs,
Under the Vengeance of that dreadful God,
Who makes ev'n Furies tremble;
Scourg'd, 'till at each reſounding Stroke,
He bellows to the Blow:
While all around, the poor tormented Ghoſts,
Ghaſtfully ſtaring with their baleful Eyes,
Ceaſe their ſhrill Cries, and their lamenting Wails;
All with Amazement huſh'd, and as they liſten,
Shuddring with Horror at his hideous Roar.
Yet what I dare, I'll tell thee.
Fame, that, with indefatigable Wings,
Borne thro' the boundleſs Regions of the Air,
Inceſſantly ſurveys this Globe of Earth,

Once in the Courſe of the revolving Year,
Stoops at theſe Iſles of Fortune, the Abodes
Of happy Heroes, ſeparated Souls,
To viſit her adopted Sons, all Demi-Gods,
Who, undiſturb'd, in theſe *Elyſian* Shades
Purſue immortal Pleaſures. If he ſhrinks not
When next the Goddeſs comes, he's ours for Ever.

Phen. When arrives ſhe?

Niſ. I dare no more, but 'tis thy Part to try
To cure *Armida* of this raging Paſſion.

Phen. Nay, then thou ſay'ſt enough; Alas! I have:
Thou know'ſt it is my Intereſt more than hers;
Rinaldo is a Chriſtian,
And wins each Moment on *Armida*'s Soul;
Who knows how far at laſt he may prevail?
If he ſhould once ſeduce her from her Faith,
What could be ſo abandon'd as *Pheniſſa?*
It is my daily Study to reclaim her.
A thouſand times in vain I have attempted it.

Niſ. Once more attempt it, then if thou ſucceed'ſt not,
Lull her with Hope, true Woes are to ſucceed,
Let her enjoy falſe Pleaſures while ſhe may.
But ſhe appears, I vaniſh.

[*Sinks.*

Enter

Enter *Armida.*

Arm. Pheniſſa, ſleeps *Rinaldo?*
Phen. He does.
Why were you abſent at the Magick Rites?
Arm. I hate this curſed Art, ſince firſt it
ſhew'd me,
That that to which the hardeſt Things are
poſſible,
Yet wants the Pow'r to calm my raging
Grief;
All Nature lies ſubjected to my Charms,
I give her Reſt, and rowze her with Alarms,
My arbitrary Voice ſhe hears with Awe,
And, ſtanding fix'd, ſuſpends th' eternal Law.
I to the Tempeſt make the Poles reſound,
And the conflicting Elements confound;
At my Command
The Thunder ruſhes out on flaming Wings,
And all the hollow Deep of Hell
With hideous Uproar rings;
Fierce Spirits, who great Heaven's Command
diſdain'd,
Submit themſelves, and are by mine re-
ſtrain'd.
The wildeſt Things are by my Pow'r con-
fin'd:
All but my wild ungovernable Mind.
But I have Home-bred Furies which rebel,
While I ſubdue the fierceſt Pow'rs of Hell.
Oh, my foreboding Soul!

Phen. Compoſe yourſelf, conſider you're a Queen.

Arm. Conſider I'm a Slave, conſider I'm a Lover.

Phen. No common Queen; they rule but common Slaves;
You govern with a Nod all *Aſia*'s Monarchs.

Arm. Effeminate, ſlothful, lukewarm Creatures all,
Whoſe Souls were but half kindled by their Maker.

Phen. Then what they want from Heav'n, they have from you;
Your Eyes have blown thoſe Souls into a Flame.

Arm. Thoſe Kings I ſcorn'd before I knew my Hero:
What are thoſe Royal Pageants? Thou haſt ſeen them,
And what is my *Rinaldo?* Thou haſt gaz'd on him.

Phen. The greateſt of Mankind, ſince to this Height
The great *Armida* by her Favours rais'd him;
Before, The laſt of the *Italian* Princes.

Arm. But the firſt of Conquerors.

Phen. A private Man, without Command in th' Army.

Arm. Fortune, and Fame, and Victory obey'd him,
Him, the ſole Pow'r of that Victorious Army.
Who was the Terror of the Eaſt, but he!

This

This private Man made all your Monarchs tremble,
Ev'n in the midſt of their own ſhivering Slaves,
To whom they ow'd their Pow'r, and their Security.
His Pow'r was in himſelf, His dauntleſs Soul,
And his unconquer'd own Right Hand his Safety.
What! tho' he rules no Empire, he deſerves one,
And has both conquer'd and rejected Crowns:
He, in his Inborn Worth, is more exalted.
No drowſy Monarch, by a dull Deſcent,
But for his high Deſert preferr'd by Heav'n,
And ſingled from the reſt of Humankind,
To execute the vaſt Deſigns of Fate.

Phen. The Theme tranſports you.

Arm. 'Tis my Love tranſports me.

Phen. 'Tis frankly own'd,
For ſuch a proud, ſevere, diſdainful Beauty.

Arm. Yes, I am proud that I myſelf have Excellence,
To know and love ſuch Merit; Surely Love
In this Exceſs has ſomething that's Divine:
Women who dote on Monſters ev'n to Madneſs,
Are proud of their own Fury. What muſt I be,
When the conſenting World admires my Choice?
Thou, whoſe cold Maſs runs curdling thro' thy Veins,

Thou gazeſt on *Rinaldo* with Deſire;
Yet thou haſt only ſeen the God of Love,
In the freſh Beauties of my blooming Hero:
O! even in thee, what Raptures had he rais'd!
Hadſt thou once ſeen him like the God of War,
While grizly Terror perch'd upon his Plume,
Severely ſhining in his dreadful Helmet,
And thundring thro' the Tempeſt of the Field.

Phen. Well! tho' you love with Fury, you poſſeſs;
Since then the God of Love has made you bleſt,
Why ſhould you toil, to make yourſelf unhappy?

Arm. Once more, I tell thee, Love has taught me Fear.

Phen. Fear! Fear of what?

Arm. The Torments which the Souls in Hell endure;
Nay, worſe, thoſe Souls have only miſs'd of Heaven,
But to have loſt it, that's the Plague of Devils.

Phen. You ſeek thoſe groundleſs Fears.

Arm. Ah no!
Hell threatned me with Fate by *Ramiel*'s Voice,
And Heaven by theſe foreboding Thoughts foretels it;
And, what is more than Heav'n or Hell to me,
Rinaldo has confirm'd it.

Phen. 'Tis but an Hour ſince he declar'd he lov'd you.

Arm.

Arm. But with ſuch Accents and ſuch Eyes declar'd it,
His very Anger had been leſs provoking;
Can one who loves with ſuch a Soul as mine,
Be tortur'd, worſe than with endearing Words,
Spoke with the Coldneſs of that cruel Air?

Phen. But how ſhould Nature bear perpetual Rapture,
When ſhe quite ſinks in momentary Tranſports?
Sometimes he meets your Love with equal Fury.

Arm. If he did not, he would be leſs than Man,
This Deſart Iſle divides us from the World,
Where He, and I, and Thou, are Humankind:
He lov'd me not at *Paleſtine*, where I
Seduc'd the very Flower of *Godfrey*'s Army,
Subdu'd their inmoſt Souls by my ſoft Arts,
And led them from the Army thro' the Eaſt,
In amorous Pomp, the common Foes of *Aſia*,
And Victims to my Uncle's great Revenge;
Only *Rinaldo*'s Soul remain'd Impregnable;
A fiercer Flame than that of Love had ſeiz'd it,
And his Eyes ſparkled with ſeverer Fires;
The Love of Glory reign'd ſole Tyrant there,
Which in great Souls ſtill rages to a Fault,
The Crime of Angels, and of Men like Angels;
Who, conſcious to their own ſurpaſſing Excellence,

Would

Would by great Actions force the Envious World
T' acknowledge their Tranſcendency of Nature.
Phen. But ſtill th' Ambitious love, as well as others;
Nature makes uſe of Love in mighty Minds,
Who elſe would be aſpiring to be Gods,
To ſhew them they are Men.
Arm. Yes, they can love, but think that Love their Frailty,
And not their Virtue;
And when that Love comes once t' obſtruct Ambition,
With all their Might they make a vaſt Effort,
And tear it from their Souls.
Phen. The knowing this,
One would have thought, might have ſecur'd your Heart.
Arm. This made me dote on him, and, as he ſlept,
Tranſport him on a Storm's ſonorous Wings,
Far from the War, and the ſhrill Trumpet's Sound,
To this ſweet Place deſign'd for Love and Joy;
Yet ev'n here, where Earth and Heav'n, nay, Hell,
Conſpires t' indulge the ſweeteſt of all Paſſions;
Where ev'n I, for whom a Thouſand Lovers
Have ſigh'd, and ſigh'd in vain, with all that's ſoft

And delicate in Love, deſcend t' incite him,
Ev'n here he has but Intervals of Paſſion;
'Tis true, thoſe Intervals are furious All,
For he in ev'ry Thing is more than Mortal:
But then anon, ev'n in my very Arms,
My eager Arms, he languiſhes for Glory:
He meditates profound, and fetches Sighs,
Which, while he vainly ſtruggles to repreſs,
With terrible Revulſions ſhake his Soul:
With Eyes upon me fix'd, he ſees me not,
And, gazing upon his, I find him abſent.
Oft in his Sleep he takes convulſive Starts,
And cries, To Arms! hark, hark, the Trumpet ſounds,
And Glory calls to Arms! I come, I fly,
Thou Darling of my Soul, thou Miſtreſs ev'n of Gods!
Then, with the Fury of the Tranſport waking,
He fetches Sighs that ſhake his inmoſt Soul.

Phen. Well, ſince Ambition rules in all great Souls,
Shake off this ſofter Rage.

Arm. I want the very Will to ſhake it off,
Ambition rules in Men, but Love prevails in Women;
Had Heav'n, that gave us ſuch attractive Grace,
Not temper'd our unruly Souls with Love,
We'd been more dangerous to Men than Devils:
Pheniſſa, I am a Woman.

Phen. But no Vulgar Woman.

Arm.

Arm. No, nor is mine a Vulgar Paſſion;
I bear a Mind no Stranger to Ambition,
But ſtill my Love prevails above my Pride.
Oh, let me never know Indifference more;
I never can, nor will be calm again;
For who could live indifferent as to Heav'n,
That had but known the vaſt Delight of Gods,
And had a Taſte of Immortality?

Phen. 'Tis the mere Fever of your Mind that talks thus,
For Love is nothing elſe.

Arm. Thou rail'ſt at Love, as Fiends baſpheme their God,
Becauſe He has abandon'd thee for ever.

Phen. My Years will bring my Sentiments to you.

Arm. O! never, never, let me ſee thoſe Years,
The Soul, that Sparkle of Cœleſtial Fire,
The longer it has lain immerſt in Matter;
The colder feels its Senſe of Heav'n and Love,
The great Originals from which it ſprung.

Phen. Reaſon requires that you ſhould rule this Paſſion.

Arm. Talk not of Reaſon, what, but Love, is Reaſon?
For, what, but Love, is Happineſs?
Love firſt appears with Reaſon in the Soul,
And, by degrees, with Reaſon it decays.
But ceaſe, forbear thy fooliſh ill tim'd Counſel,
With ſilent Awe attend my Potent Charm.

And

And thou, O Air, that murmur'ſt on the Mountain,
Be huſh'd at my Command: Silence, ye Winds,
That make outrageous War upon the Ocean;
And thou, old Ocean, lull thy wond'ring Waves;
Ye warring Elements, be huſh'd as Death,
While I impoſe my dread Commands on Hell;
And thou, profoundeſt Hell, whoſe dreadful Sway,
Is given to me, by Fate and *Demogorgon*,
Hear, hear, my powerful Voice thro' all thy Regions!
By *Demogorgon*, I command thee, Hear!
And from thy gloomy Caverns thunder thy Reply.

[*Subterranean Thunder.*

I am obey'd ———
Now ſend up Dreams that may be fitteſt found
T'impoſe upon *Rinaldo*'s ſlumbring Thoughts,
And to enſlave his Soul.

Spirits or Dreams ariſe in the Shapes of Bertoldo *and* Sophia, *Parents to* Rinaldo; *and of ſome that* Rinaldo *had ſlain in Battle.*

Bert. *Rinaldo!*
Soph. *Rinaldo!*

Bert.

Bert. *Look up, Behold the Mournful Shade*
Of him who gave thee Breath,
Who ſteps to ſee thee, while thou'rt laid
Upon the Confines here of Death;
T'inform thee of thy future State,
And, e'er yet it be too late,
To prevent thy wretched Fate.

Soph. *Look up, my Son, Look up, on me,*
In me th' Afflicted Sophia *ſee.*
Ah Son! not all the grinding Throws,
With which, when thou wert born,
My Tortur'd Nerves were torn,
Equall'd half the racking Woes,
Which now thy Mother undergoes,
Thou Darling of my Soul, for thee.

Bert. *Laſt Night I caſt a Look,*
Upon Fate's dreadful Book;
And read a Leſſon which no Brain,
That is Mortal, can ſuſtain,
While all my Soul with Horror ſhook.

Soph. *Oh! the Diſtraction of the Sight,*
And, Oh! the Torments of the Fright;
I never, never ſhall forget that Night.

Bert. *Rowze all thy Faculties, my Son,*
And to my fatal Words give Ear,
For, know, that they concern thee near;
No longer let thy Fancy run
After that Airy Fantom Fame:

But Love Armida *with a conſtant Flame;*
Or Deſtiny decrees,
Thou ſhalt feel Woes, which but to hear,
Would diſtract thy Soul with Fear,
And all thy Blood with Horror freeze.

Soph. *Ah! ſee around the raving Hoſts,*
Of purple Ghoſts,
Whoſe Blood thou haſt in Battle ſpilt,
With fearful Guilt.
Who, unleſs aw'd by her commanding Pow'r,
Would, ah! this Moment, tear thee and devour!

[Dance begins.

Bert. *How they advance with whirling Brands,*
All flaming in their threatning Hands!
And as they go their dreadful Round,
Revenge! Revenge! reſound.

Chorus of Sp. *For Revenge, for Revenge, to* Armida *we call,*
That we terribly may on our Murderer fall;
That as now we with Sulphurous Torches ſurround him,
We with our Screams, and our Scorpions may wound him;
And with aſtoniſhing Horrors confound him.

[*During the Chorus, a Dance of Spirits.*

Arm. By Heav'n, *Rinaldo* ſmiles at all their Threats,
And, ſlumb'ring, ſcorns this terrible Appearance. Con-

Confuſion and Amazement! What do I hear?
[*Fame's Trumpet.*
What Trumpet's this, whoſe great and martial Sound
Makes the World eccho to its Muſick?
[*Spirits vaniſh.*
Ha! diſappear'd! all vaniſh'd on the ſudden!
Gone, undiſmiſs'd! The Charm not yet unbound!
Ho! *Arioc*! Hear, and know my awful Voice,
At my Command appear again, I charge thee,
Or elſe, be baniſh'd from my Sight for Ever.

Arioc half riſing.

O Queen, to whom thy Excellence of Nature,
And thy tranſcendent Beauty, gives Command
O'er all th' infernal Powers; for in thy Brightneſs [tions,
We ſee what once we were in our high Sta-
And ſome reflected Beams enjoy
Of that ſupremely bliſsful Viſion,
From whoſe Enjoyment, our aſpiring Minds
Have baniſh'd us for Ever:
Excuſe thy Slaves, unable to obey thee,
For, know, a greater Power now drives us hence;
One of the brighteſt of th' Empyreal Manſions,
Expels us with a Stream of Light,
That ſets this *Atmoſphere* on Fire,
And with its Blaze, inſufferably bright,
Confounds

Confounds Hell's gloomy Powers;
Summon th' *Aerial* Spirits to thy Aid,
For they who, pois'd upon expanded Wings,
Lie basking in the Sun's *Meridian* Glory,
Are fitter to ſuſtain Heav'n's flaming Miniſters,
Than we, who ſojourn in the dusky Deep;
And they, perhaps, too, with enchanting Voices,
To Pleaſure may ſeduce *Rinaldo*'s Soul.
Pleaſure, thou know'ſt, can tame that dauntleſs Soul,
Which thou no more by Terrors canſt ſubdue,
Than fright the dreadful God, who darts the Thunder.
But, Oh! diſmiſs me, for I can no more;
A Deluge of Empyreal Light o'erwhelms me.
Arm. Be gone then, and for Eaſe, to Hell repair. [*Vaniſhes.*
But ſee, *Rinaldo* wakens, Oh! Aſtoniſhment!
How ev'ry thing I ſee and hear, confounds me,
And ſhews, a Power above my own, controuls me:
Let us retire, and then, unſeen, obſerve him,
I, from himſelf, my Deſtiny would learn.

Rinaldo *riſes from the Couch*, Armida *and* Pheniſſa *retire to the Side of the Stage.*

Rin. Methought the Trumpet's noble Sound
Alarm'd me to the Combat;

Was it Illuſion that? or was it Real?
Let it be what it will, it gives thee Cauſe
To ask thyſelf this Queſtion, What thou wert?
And what thou art at preſent? O *Rinaldo!*
Heav'n gave thee Reaſon for thy Guide of Action,
But that's a Lamp ſet up in ev'ry Breaſt.
Heav'n gave thee yet a more exalted Spirit,
Which reach'd above the frail Efforts of Reaſon;
For Reaſon only teaches Man his Duty:
That rais'd thy free-born Soul to nobler Heights,
To Things ſuperlatively great and good,
Beyond what Reaſon, or what Heav'n requir'd.
But where's that Spirit now? That tow'ring Faculty,
Which, mounting, ſoar'd above Humanity?
'Tis now half quench'd by an ignobler Fire.
Oh baſe Deſertion from Myſelf and Glory!

Arm. Hear this, *Pheniſſa*; now are my Fears groundleſs?

Rin. Nay, thou haſt ſtifled too the very Dictates
Of common Reaſon, which Mankind obeys,
And while Ten thouſand Slaves before *Jeruſalem*,
Urg'd by their Duty, in this very Moment,
To Danger and to Death bid loud Defiance,
Thou loyter'ſt here in ſoft inglorious Eaſe.
Perhaps the Fable of the Army: Ha!

Canſt

Canſt thou bear that? Canſt thou ſo much as think
That thou deſerv'ſt to be contemn'd, and live?
Arm. Oh, I am loſt, beyond all Hope, undone!
Rin. Nay, canſt thou bear ev'n this? That thou no more
Deſerv'ſt to be preferr'd above the reſt?
Above the reſt, admir'd? That in this Moment
The brave *Tancredi*, like Cœleſtial *Jove*,
With Thunder in his Hands, diſtributes Fate,
While thou——By Heav'n I'd rather be a Dog,
And lead a Brutal Life, without Reflection,
Than to be ſtung with the tormenting Thought,
That one, who is my Fellow Creature,
Merits to command me.
Oh, what's, what's become of that aſpiring Greatneſs,
That once diſdain'd to yield to leſs than infinite!
'Tis loſt, 'tis to a Woman's Will abandon'd.
Phen. Madam, contain yourſelf.
Rin. 'Tis true, thou lov'ſt her with that Height of Fury,
Which none, but her inimitable Beauties,
Could ever have inſpir'd.
Phen. Obſerve him now.
Rin. But what? The Vulgar can command ſmall Paſſions;
'Tis for *Rinaldo* to controul the fierceſt.

Why art thou, by Fame's Hundred Tongues extoll'd?
Why, by her Golden Trump, proclaim'd a Hero,
If thou haſt only brutal Force to boaſt of?
'Tis chiefly Force of Mind, that makes a Hero.
Then, O thou lovelieſt of thy Sex, *Armida*,
Thou only one of all created Beings,
That e'er had Pow'r to fire *Rinaldo*'s Heart,
Be ſatisfied with this, That only thou
Hadſt Pow'r to move his Soul, which, for a Time,
Admir'd thee equal to eternal Glory.

[*Fame*'s Trumpet *and Voices.*

Rinaldo, *in th' enchanted Grove,*
Prepare to meet immortal Love;
Straight to the Bow'r of Bliſs repair,
Fortune *and* Fame *attend thee there.*

Rin. Again, that noble Clangor, and with Voices!
Nay, then 'tis evident 'tis no Illuſion.
Who e'er thou art, that with thoſe God-like Sounds,
Thus raiſeſt all that's pow'rful in my Nature,
This Moment, in th' enchanted Grove, I'll meet thee.
But O, *Rinaldo!* whither wert thou fall'n?
Who want'ſt a Call to rouze thee from thy Lethargy,
That might awake the Dead, and make them ſtart From

From their eternal Slumbers? [*Exit.*

Arm. Patience, ye Heav'ns, or thou, Hell, revenge!
But let us to th' enchanted Grove repair,
And thither call the Pow'rs that rule the Air;
Yet, leſt the Charms of Pleaſure too ſhould fail,
Hell, let thy gloomy Gods their laſt Efforts prepare,
If Deſtiny decrees, that, after all,
I needs muſt periſh, like Myſelf I'll fall;
I'll fall like one whoſe arbitrary Sway,
Th' Aerial, and th' Infernal, Gods obey;
With me the Traitor ſhall not only die,
But groaning Nature in Convulſions lie.

Now to the Bow'r of Bliſs let's fly,
And all the Way we go,
Hell, by thy Muſick, ſhow,
Thou art enrag'd, as well as I.

The END *of the Second* ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE, *The Enchanted Wilderneſs.*

Soft Muſick, Rinaldo ſolus.

RINALDO.

WEre then thoſe glorious Voices but Deluſions,
That call'd me with that Pomp of noble Harmony?
Fortune, they cry'd, *and Fame attended here*,
But all Things here, as ſoft as Lovers Wiſhes:
This magick Symphony with Sweetneſs ſooths me,
And ev'ry thing around me breathes Deſire,
Which paſſes thro' my Senſes to my Soul,
And, to *Armida*'s beauteous Image, there
Imparts freſh Force, and new Divinity.
That Image too perpetually torments me,
Reflecting on th' ecſtatick Joys,
Which I muſt loſe for Ever.

Enter *Armida* and *Pheniſſa*.

Arm. See where he walks in gloomy Contemplation!
Summon the *Aerial* Spirits to their Duty,
While I, unſeen, obſerve him.

Rin.

Rin. Could'ſt thou reſolve then, ſhould
Heav'n ſend th' Occaſion,
To leave this lovely Maſter-piece of Nature;
To leave her in this Fulneſs of Deſire,
This Height of all thy furious Wiſhes;
When each ſucceeding Hour
Adds to her Graces, and ſublimes thy
Pleaſure?
Canſt thou reſolve to ſee that Face no more;
And never more to hear that Voice,
Whoſe Muſick charms above the magick
Songs,
Ev'n of th' Immortal Miniſters who ſerve
her?
Canſt thou Reſolve? Ay, There's the dread-
ful Queſtion!
For what can be ſo terrible to Nature,
As to fall all at once from bliſsful Rapture,
To the curſt State of wiſhing without Hope?
Canſt thou make this Effort, and live? No
matter,
Life's not the Thing in Queſtion now, 'tis Glory.
Arm. See how the Tempeſt of his Paſſion
tears him!
But can'ſt thou hear him thus contrive thy
Ruin,
And yet ſtand tamely by?
Thou, who canſt cruſh him in a Moment!
Since thou haſt cloy'd him with thy Softneſs,
What if he heard thee thunder in his Ears,
With that terrible Voice that untunes Nature,
And makes th' inverted Spheres fall into
Diſcord?

But ſomething tender in my Soul reſtrains me,
Is it Compaſſion? No, 'tis ſomething ſofter,
Thou lov'ſt the Traytor ſtill; lov'ſt him to Madneſs.
I do, I will, I muſt. Can ever Woman
Behold that Form without a bleeding Heart?
That Mien that claims the Empire of the Univerſe?
With which he may give Laws to Humankind:
May the high Place, with Dignity, maintain
Of Heav'n's great Viceroy for this Under-World,
And repreſent Immortal Majeſty.
[*She comes forward.*
Once more I'll try Endearments.
[*Perceiving her.*
Rin. Ha! The Queen!
Now, where are all thy feeble Reſolutions?
One Glance has humbled thy aſpiring Thoughts,
Pleaſure flows ſtreaming from thoſe lovely Eyes,
And with its Sweetneſs overcomes my Soul.
If 'tis a Crime to look, and be tranſported,
Why was I made thus ſenſible to Pleaſure?
Why was ſhe form'd with that ſurpaſſing Beauty,
That might tranſport an Angel from his Sphere,
And fix him by Divine Reſemblance here?
Armida! My Queen! My Miſtreſs!

Arm. Yes, ſhe is here, and ſtill the ſame ſhe has been,
Unleſs that to herſelf ſhe's alter'd;
That I muſt ſee,
[*Pulls out a Glaſs, and looks in it.*
At leaſt I'm ſure ſhe is the ſame to thee;
But thou art alter'd to thy ſelf and me,
And thou art loſt to both.

Rin. So loſt indeed was I, while I
From thee, the dearer Part of me, was abſent;
But I ſhall find myſelf again in thee.
[*To her looking in the Glaſs.*
Why doſt thou vainly ſeek thy Likeneſs there?
Can the frail Cryſtal repreſent Divinity?
Would'ſt thou behold theſe Eyes in all their Glories?
To ſee the Force of their Cœleſtial Fire,
Turn them on mine, all flaming with Deſire;
Or look upon the Cryſtal of the Skies,
And view thy own in the World's flaming Eyes;
Thoſe Eyes which vaſt Intelligences move,
Minds made like thine, all Knowledge and all Love.

Arm. By all my Hopes of Happineſs and Him,
His Heart's once more my own. *Rinaldo* ſit;
To drive away all Sorrow from thy Soul,
I'll give thee Muſick that may lull Deſpair;
And tempt the dire Tormentors of the Damn'd,
With lifted Brands, to liſten to its Air.

Aerial

Aerial Spirits, who attend me, Hear,
And, ſhap'd like Gods whom *Greece* ador'd,
appear.

Symphony of Flutes, Venus, Cupid, *and a Chorus of Loves and Graces.*

Ven. Cupid, *come to the Relief,*
Of thy Mother's piercing Grief;
Hither quickly, Cupid, *fly;*
With thee bring thy keeneſt Dart,
To ſubdue a Rebel Heart,
Thou art ſcorn'd, as well as I.

Ritornelle.

Cho. *Come* Cupid, *on thy Golden Wing,*
And in thy ſounding Quiver bring
Pernicious Arrows, wing'd with Fire,
T'inflict incurable Deſire.

Symphony.

[*Cupid* flying down.

Thus flying thro' the Balmy Air,
To my great Parent I repair;
And tho' the World's maintain'd by me,
Yet, Mother, to attend on thee,
I leave the mighty Care.

Ven. *A Mortal in this fragrant Bow'r,*
Preſumes that he's above our Pow'r.

Cup.

Cup. *I'll make that Mortal know,*
That none too great for Love can grow:
I tame the mighty Pow'rs above,
And cruel Gods below.

Ritornelle.

Great Jove, *whoſe Arms the Lightning ſling*
Has felt my fiercer Fire,
And Hell's inexorable King
Has yielded to Deſire.

Cho. *Great* Jove, *whoſe Arms the Lightning ſling,*
Has felt thy fiercer Fire, &c.

Cup. *Now quickly thro' th' Enchanted Grove,*
Let all my nimble Brethren rove.

Dance.

Ven. *Let Earth, and Air, and Flood, and Fire,*
And ev'ry Thing around, conſpire
To breathe forth ſoft and ſweet Deſire.

Cho. *Let Earth, and Air,* &c.

Enter Urania, Ubaldo, Carlo.

Ur. Thus we, unſeen, have paſt the winding Mazes
Of this Enchanted Labyrinth, and now
Stand here inviſible to Mortal Sight,
To all unleſs *Rinaldo*'s.

See,

See, where the wanton Lovers lie reclin'd,
In all the ſoft and pleaſing Pomp of Luxury.
But now 'tis Heav'n's high Will that I retire,
And the remaining Task conſign to you:
[*To* Carlo.
To you I delegate this ſacred Wand,
This Wand whoſe pow'rful Touch no impious Spirit,
Whether of Earth, or Air, or Fire, can bear,
With which thou ſhalt expel theſe ſhining Fantoms.
Then waiting the Departure of th' Enchantreſs,
Ubaldo, thou ſhalt firſt approach *Rinaldo*.
And to his Eyes preſenting that bright Orb,
Shew him himſelf, the only Form can ſhake him.
[*Exit.*

Carlo *goes round, waving his Wand, and the Spirits vaniſh.*

Arm. What? All upon the Wing? And undiſmiſs'd too!
All ſtarting with Amazement from their Stations,
Like watchful Fowl, that ſpring, upon deſcrying
The Fowler's ſly Approach.
What can this mean, that neither is in Nature,
Nor in the Compaſs of my pow'rful Art;
That Hell, or cannot, or elſe dare not ſpeak!
Rinaldo too, ſeems ſtrangely diſcompoſed;
What

What ails my Love? What means that furious Start?
Why do thy lovely Eyes appear thus terrible?
And threatning ſhoot their fiery Glances that Way?
Rin. Why have you done this?
Arm. What have I done? Thou art not well, my Love.
Rin. Why have you rais'd theſe Fantoms to delude me,
In that provoking Poſture?
Arm. Theſe Fantoms are within thee, I ſee nothing;
I, who a hundred times a Day view Beings,
That are to thee Inviſible.
Sure, 'tis th' Effect of his diſtemper'd Mind!
But then my Spirits, who are fled unlicens'd:
The more I think, the more I grow confounded.
My Genius ſeems to whiſper me within,
Armida! Fate approaches.
An Icy Horror ſtrikes thro' all my Veins,
And freezes as it runs: Not far from hence,
There is a diſmal Cave, the Mouth of Hell,
Out of the which, th' old ugly Beldame Night,
With Twenty thouſand Fiends, her fearful Equipage,
Each Evening ruſhes to uſurp the Sky,
And in her hideous Flight deform
Th' afflicted Face of Nature: ſtraight *Pheniſſa*
Into its monſtrous Caverns ſhall deſcend,
And thither ſummoning Hell's blackeſt Furies,

Fiends

Fiends too abominable, to behold
The Face of Heav'n or mine,
Shall there compel them to unfold my Deſtiny.

Ubaldo *and* Carlo *go up to* Rinaldo, *who had been all this while obſerving them.*

Rin. Ha! What are you,
That in this Poſture of Defiance,
Thus dare t' explore the Secrets of a Solitude,
That's ſacred to th'Immortal Pow'rs and me?
What are you? Speak, or ———

Carlo Men.
Ub. Soldiers.
Carl. Friends.
Ub. Ubaldo.
Carl. Carlo.

Ub. Now, what art thou; Look there and ſatisfy thyſelf.
[*Preſents the Adamantine Shield to him.*
Rin. Damnation! what indeed? For 'tis impoſſible
That thou canſt be *Rinaldo.* Oh, Diſhonour!
Earth open quick, and take me to the Center!
Ye Cedars fall, and cruſh me to conceal me!
But what Retreat can hide me from my Thoughts?
For I have ſeen my Shame, and that's to me,
As much as if th' aſſembled World beheld it.

What

What Godlike Forms are thoſe, compar'd to mine?
Off, ye vile Trappings of ſoft *Syrian* Slaves,
[*Tears off his Ghirlands.*
The Pride of little baſe Effeminate Wretches,
That want the very Outſide of Humanity.
Carl. Now he begins to be once more *Rinaldo*,
Throws off the Captive, and reſumes the Demi-god.
We come to free thee from inglorious Thraldom,
Follow us.
Rin. Whither,
Ub. To *Jeruſalem.*
Rin. Ha!
Ub. Godfrey invites thee.
Carl. The univerſal Camp demands thee.
Victory, on her Eagle's Wings, attends thee.
Ub. Fortune, and everlaſting Fame expect thee.
Art thou not fir'd? When *Europe*, and when *Aſia*,
Contending for the Empire of the World,
In dreadful Conflict meet, Is this a Place,
This ſoft Retreat, for that aſpiring Soul,
That once was foremoſt in the Race of Glory?
Rin. Great Deeds are oft in Solitude perform'd.
Ub. Of all created Spirits, is there one,
So covetous of Deathleſs Fame, as thine?
Then were are thy Applauders here?

Rin.

Rin. The Brave can never be without Applauders,
The Gods, and I myſelf, approve my Actions.
Ub. Canſt thou deſert the darling Cauſe of Heav'n,
And yet affirm, that Heav'n approves thy Actions?
What wants there but thy Sword, O fatal Warrior,
To finiſh this Croiſade with glorious Victory?
T' extinguiſh that abominable Sect,
And put an End to all their impious Rites?
Break forth, and be thy God-like ſelf once more,
The matchleſs Champion of the Chriſtian Cauſe,
Who art now th' Egregious Champion of a Woman;
Break from her Influence, whoſe malignant Aſpect
Eclipſes all thy Glory.
Rin. Have neither of you ſeen this Woman,
Whom thus diſdainfully you mention?
Ub. Thou know'ſt we have.
Rin. Did you unmov'd behold her? No, you lov'd her,
Ev'n to the loſs of Reaſon, both you lov'd her,
Contemn'd and us'd like Slaves, you doted on her;
I met you, led in Triumph both, and bound,
Bound in ignobler Bonds than thoſe of Love;
I met you, and deliver'd you, unmann'd
To that degree, you grumbled at your Freedom,
Becauſe your Baſeneſs had Excuſe no longer.

Have

Have I a Soul ſo little ſenſible,
That I ſhould leave the ſoft, the kind *Armida*,
When her Diſdain and her imperious Fierceneſs,
Could ſo engaging prove to you?
Me ſhe yet never gave juſt Cauſe to leave her,
Unleſs becauſe for me ſhe left an Empire,
And the Addreſſes of all *Aſia*'s Monarchs.

Ub. Our Actions ought not to be Rules for yours;
You have a Soul of a ſuperior Order.

Rin. Could you perſuade my Vanity to that,
Great Souls by mighty'ſt Paſſions are tormented;
Beſides, *Armida* has Ten thouſand Charms,
Of which you never can have any Notion.
Could Cruelty have binding Force for you?
And am I urg'd to leave the laſt Endearments?
That only by their ſweet Remembrance pierce
My inmoſt Soul, and rowze up ſleeping Raptures.

Ub. A Hero ne'er can want a worthier Miſtreſs.

Rin. Thou talk'ſt; but, ah! thou do'ſt not think, *Ubaldo:*
For him who has enjoy'd *Armida*,
There is no other Miſtreſs.
Thou haſt beheld her Angel Form,
And frowning, it has raviſh'd thee.
Thou know'ſt her Science, and her wondrous Wit too,
But, ah! thou ne'er can'ſt know with how much Art,
She makes that Wit ſubſervient to her Happineſs;

When ſhe deſigns to bleſs the Man ſhe loves,
And raiſe him to a God, with Height of Rapture:
Were you that happy Man, would you forſake her?
At leaſt, thou ſhould'ſt not, *Carlo*;
Thy languid Eyes, that glow with humid Fires,
Declare too well thy Soul.

Carl. I muſt confeſs, I ſhould not.

Ub. Nay, then all's loſt. Heav'n's darling Cauſe is loſt!

Rin. Ubaldo, No,
What I have ſaid, has been deſign'd to ſhew,
That the great Thing I now ſhall do, is owing,
Not to the Influence of your frail Perſuaſion,
Who ſtand convicted both, and both confounded;
But the full Force of my own reaſoning Virtue.
Tho' dearer than my Life I love *Armida*,
I love my Duty and my Honour more;
And ſince they call, *Rinaldo* will obey.
But, Oh, thou Tyrant Glory, how much gentler,
And how much lovelier in the Field I found thee,
When, ſtain'd with Human Gore, from far thou beckon'd'ſt,
And I, while Death and Horror ſtalk'd before me,
Broke thro' the whole *Arabian* Horſe to join thee,
And mow'd my Paſſage thro' the *Syrian* Infantry.

Ub.

Ub. There ſpoke the very firſt, and beſt of Heroes

Urania, Entring] Nay, then appear, *Urania.*

Rin. The bleſt *Urania* here!

Ur. Yes, now you purge your Stains by ſuch Contrition,
Urania dares appear.
She has with Tranſport, and with Wonder heard thee;
Thou haſt aſſum'd a God-like Reſolution.

Rin. Yes, I will leave my very Life, my Soul;
Farewel, thou dearer Part of me, and with thee,
Pleaſure, farewel; a long Farewel, ye Raptures,
That have ſo often in this bliſsful Bow'r,
Rais'd me above the Height of Mortal Happineſs.

Enter Pheniſſa.

Phen. My Lord, the Queen your Miſtreſs ——— Ha!
Bleſs me, what Shapes are thoſe!

Ur. Tell her ſhe is no more *Rinaldo*'s Miſtreſs,
And he no more a Slave.

Phen. What's this I hear? Nay, then aſſiſt me, Hell;
Fly, *Niſroe*, fly, and on the Wings of Lightning
Convey this News I charge thee.
This certainly muſt turn her Love to Hate,
To mortal Hate; and force her to deſtroy him. [*Exit.*

Rin. Now, all ye ſeparated Souls of Heroes,
Who in this happy Iſle, injoy Immortal Pleaſures;
Who hovering in the balmy Air around me,
Beheld the dreadful Conflict in my Breaſt,
And ſaw me, with a bleeding Heart, a Victor;
Say all, if I deſerve a Place
In your Illuſtrious Roll?

Ur. No *Roman* e'er did half ſo much for Glory:
True, they reſign'd their Lives for Glory,
But ſoon their Pangs were over.
Thou art contented to live greatly miſerable:
But quickly let us fly, thou know'ſt *Armida*,
And know'ſt how far her dreadful Pow'r extends;
That Pow'r that ſets Earth, Hell, and Heav'n in Uproar,
While Chaos huſh'd, ſtands liſt'ning to the Noiſe,
And wondring at Confuſion not his own;
And tho' ſhe ſhould not hurt us, ſhe may ſhake us.
But, hark! already ſhe begins! Already,
[*The Serpent and Baſes ſoftly under the Stage.*
Hell's grizly Tyrant takes the dire Alarm;
In frantick Haſte, ev'n now, the Furies arm,
Th'Infernal Trumpet thro'th'Abyſs profound,
Horribly rumbles with its dreary Sound.
Hark! [*Here the Muſick plays out.*
In that Roar Hell's dreadful Mounds are paſt.
Hark! *Here the Alarm plays out again.*
Now the vaulted Heavens reſtore the diſmal Blaſt.

Ub.

Ub. I ſtiffen with Aſtoniſhment!
Carl. And I grow chill with Horror!
Bleſs me! what hideous Forms are thoſe,
That, threatning, nod their ghaſtly Skulls,
And ſtalk t' oppoſe our Paſſage.
Rin. Why, thoſe are Creatures, whom their Crimes have thrown
So far below us, we to them are Gods;
In Scorn of all their empty Threats, I'll on.
Are we not Spirits too? Immortal Beings,
Whom only we ourſelves have Pow'r to hurt?
[*Alarm again.*
I fear the fair *Armida*'s Softneſs more,
Than all theſe ghaſtly Shapes, and all this dreadful Roar.

The END *of the Third* ACT.

The foreſaid Alarm is repeated for the Act Tune.

ACT IV.

SCENE, *The Country before the Enchanted PALACES.*

Enter *Pheniſſa* and *Niſroe.*

NISROE.

WHY am I call'd with ſo much eager haſte?

Phen. Oh, I want Time to tell thee, haſte, be gone,
Fly, fly, this very Moment,
Swift as a Storm, impetuous as the Lightning,
To execute *Armida*'s dreadful Will.

Niſ. Rinaldo ———

Phen. Is gone! with Vengeance, and with Death o'ertake him;
Go, bid th' avenging Miniſters of Fate,
Ruſh thro' the inmoſt Chambers of the Earth,
And ſhake the World's Foundations.
Bid the Tempeſtuous Pow'rs that rule the Air,
Let looſe th' unbridled Fury of the Winds,
To overthrow their Empire.
And let the Furies with Infernal Horrors,
Affright, aſtoniſh and confound the Traytor.

What!

What! ſtand'ſt thou pauſing now the Queen's betray'd?

Niſ. I do not pauſe, this Moment thou'rt obey'd.
Behold that grizly Form which there aſcends,
[*Spirit aſcends.*
The dire Forerunner of Confuſion;
As in this Weſtern Main a ſmall black Cloud,
Lifting its threatning Head above th'Horizon,
The Signal of the Warring Winds,
Foreruns the dreadful Hurricane ———
This riſing Fantom, by its black Appearance,
Alarms Millions of Immortal Spirits,
To raiſe up Tumults that will ſhake all Nature.

Phen. Let us be gone then, Thou to Hell,
And to the Queen, my Miſtreſs, I,
To tell her what thou haſt done. [*Exeunt.*

Thunder and Lightning; Spirit comes forward, and ſings.

Spir. *Ye Spirits that dwell in Earth, Fire, and Air,*
Hither, hither, hither, hither, hurrying repair:
Behold your great Miſtreſs, Armida's *betray'd,*
Hither, hither, hither, hurry all to her Aid.

Cho. *Lo! from Earth, from Hell, and from Sky,*
With Vengeance laden, we fly.

Spir. *Ye Fiends that are lurking in Graves,*
Or gliding in vaulted Caves,
All working amain in your Holes,
Heave, heave up the crumbling Earth like Moles.

Till the Mountain ſhakes,
And the Rock its Baſis forſakes,
And the Heart of the Traytor quakes.

Cho. *'Tis done! ſee, the Mountain ſhakes,*
And the Rock its Baſis forſakes.

Spir. *Ye Pow'rs who govern the Air,*
Let nought but Confuſion be there;
Haſte to ſend forth
The ſtormy North,
And unbind the deep Mouth
Of the Bluſtring South:
Let them blow, let them blow, till with Fu-
ry they roar,
And ambitious old Ocean diſdains the Shore.

Cho. *Hark, how they blow! Hark, how they blow!*
If they go on, thro' the Void they will ſweep
The Heav'ns, the Earth, and the Deep,
And the World into Chaos will throw!

Spir. *Now flying in Crowds,*
Charge, charge all your Clouds,
Charge them all with deſtructive Thunder,
Let it roar, till it rends the Vaſt all aſunder.
Let the Lightning fearfully blaze,
Till Mortals who gaze,
Fall dead at the terrible Wonder.

Cho. *'Tis done! 'tis done! and we ſhake*
At the dire Confuſion we make.

Spir.

Spir. *Ye Furies, who reign in unquenchable Fires,*
To the Sound of your Tells tune your horrible Lyres;
And give us that Muſick by which you redouble
The Horrors of Hell, and unſpeakable Trouble.

Cho. *'Tis done!*

Spir. *Now add to the Symphony Clinking of Chains.*

Cho. *'Tis done!*

Spir. *Add the Howls of the Damn'd, in the Height of their Pains.*

Cho. *'Tis done!*

Spir. *Add their Scream and their Roar, and their Serpentine Hiſs.*

Cho. *'Tis done!*

Spir. *Let* Lucifer's *Thunder now anſwer to this,*
And bellow alternately thro' the Abyſs.

Cho. *'Tis done! and 'tis paſt our Pow'r to know,*
Whether this be Chaos *or no!*

Enter

Enter Armida *and* Pheniſſa.

Phen. At length you have mov'd his mighty Soul.

Arm. But 'tis with Anger, not with Fear, he's mov'd;
See! where, tranſported with a Noble Fury,
Lovelily dreadful as a warring Angel,
He drives th' Infernal Fantoms all before him.

Phen. Redouble your Efforts.

Arm. That certainly deſtroys him.

Phen. No matter, ſince you cannot ſhake him, cruſh him.

Arm. Thus Godlike! Thus inſenſible of Fear!

Phen. Think He's inſenſible of Love too.

Arm. Perhaps he may relent. He comes this Way,
And I will make the Tryal.

Phen. Relent! What can you hope? What can you do?
When Furies can't prevail?

Arm. Shew him a greater.

Phen. A greater! What greater?

Arm. A Woman,
An injur'd Woman!
Wrong'd in her Love, and raging for Revenge.

Phen. Be wiſe, and let him periſh.

Arm. Yes, he ſhall periſh if he dares perſiſt;

But

But thou, the Giver of bold fatal Counſels,
Aſſure thy ſelf, that thou ſhalt periſh with him.
But, ſee, he comes, and, to my Wiſh, alone,
Divided by the Tempeſt from his Friends:
Without Reply, be gone. [*Exit* Phen.

Enter Rinaldo; *Thunder and Lightning, and Horrid Muſick alternately.*

Arm. Be ſtill, at my Command be ſtill, ye Furies,
And ye, reſtrain your roaring Mouths, ye Thunders,
For I am to be heard.
Rin. Ha! The Queen!
The only Object which I would avoid!
Ay, here's the Sight at which my Genius ſhrinks.
Now, all ye Motives to my great Proceeding,
Thou, the Remembrance of my former Triumphs,
And Thou, the Hope of Future, Thou, O Glory,
That Day and Night in my aſpiring Mind
Rageſt with inextinguiſhable Fire;
United, aid me in this dreadful Conflict.
And Thou, too, conſcious of thy great Original,
Rowze, rowze each nobler Faculty, my Soul,
Exert thy utmoſt Force in thy Defence,

For

For dreadful is the Danger.
Armida!

Arm. Traytor!

Rin. Traytor!

Armida has had kinder Thoughts for me.

Arm. Ungrateful Wretch! Am I at laſt reproach'd with it?

I have, and, therefore, doubly thou'rt a Traytor.

Have I ſelected thee from all Mankind,
To heap upon thee Obligations!——
And baſely, after all, to ſteal away!

Rin. You wrong me.

Are not your Centinels in ev'ry Corner?
Have not your Airy Scouts o'er-ſpread the Iſland?
How could I hope then to depart unknown?

Arm. Confuſion! Am I then defy'd? Hark!

Th' impatient Thunder grumbles to be at thee;
Ten Thouſand raging Fiends around thee wait,
Watching the Sign to ſpring and to devour thee,
At my leaſt Nod, moſt certain Death attends thee.

Rin. I go to ſeek him in the Search of Glory.
And if I find him here,
There's a long Voyage ſav'd.

Arm. Then you will go?

Rin. Will! Have you not urg'd it?

Arm.

Arm. Oh, Confuſion! What do I hear?
Audacious Fool! to tempt thy certain Ruin,
And baſely to preſume to that Degree
Upon the poor Remains of Tenderneſs,
Which to this Moment have preſerv'd thee:
I urg'd it?——

Rin. Yes, Urg'd it by your Impotent Attempts,
To fright me from Departure.

Arm. Oh, Patience yet a Moment!

Rin. The Greatneſs of my Mind is now concern'd,
And tho' I had no other Call than that,
I would be gone. Gods! that you ſhould deſcend
So far beneath your ſelf,
To think that you could love a Man ſo baſe,
As to be ſway'd by Fear.

Arm. By my remaining Hopes of great Revenge,
I ne'er deſign'd to fright thee, but deſtroy thee;
I know thy Soul incapable of Fear,
Ev'n of the Fear of doing baſeſt Wrongs.

Rin. Whom have I wrong'd?

Arm. Whom haſt thou ſworn eternally to love?

Rin. Armida! And that Hour I ceaſe to love her,
Hear me, ye Gods! pierce me with all your Bolts;
But from this Hour I ne'er will ſee her more.

Arm.

Arm. Hell and Confuſion! Dar'ſt thou mock my Miſery?

Rin. I dare not do a Thing ſo much beneath
The Greatneſs of my Soul.

Arm. Didſt thou not ſay, that thou Reſolv'ſt to love me?

Rin. Eternally.

Arm. And yet reſolv'ſt to leave me?

Rin. By Heav'ns for ever.

Arm. O vile Diſſembler!

Rin. Madam, I muſt be gone, for I am call'd
With ſuch a Voice as Man dares not reſiſt.

Arm. By whom?

Rin. By Victory, by Fame, by Heav'n.

Arm. To do a barbarous Thing? Impoſſible!

Rin. 'Twas but this Moment that th' Immortal Pow'rs,
Call'd loudly from above, Begone *Rinaldo*,
Without delay, begone, 'tis We command Thee;
Fortune, and Victory, and Fame attend Thee;
This very Night begone, or ſtay for Ever.

Arm. Meer Vapour! and deluding Viſion all!

Rin. 'Tis real all, by Heav'n, this very Moment
I heard th' Ætherial Trump upon the Mountain,

While

While the Hill trembled with th' eternal
Clangor;
Urania too, and *Carlo*, and *Ubaldo*,
With Meſſages from *Godfrey*, are arriv'd.
Arm. They muſt return.
Rin. Without me?
Arm. Fate has by me pronounc'd it.
Rin. What will th' Army? What will all
Aſia think?
Arm. The greateſt and moſt glorious of
them all,
Will envy thy tranſcendent Happineſs.
Rin. But Envy always ſtirs up baſe-born
Minds,
To blacken whom they envy;
I ſhall become the common Talk of Slaves.
Arm. They can but talk, while in Re-
venge we'll live.
Rin. Nay, then I leave you as my Mor-
tal Enemy.
Arm. Your Mortal Enemy! Provoking
Wretch!
On ev'ry Side avoidleſs Fate ſurrounds thee.
To whom then do'ſt thou owe the very
Breath
That thus pronounces this audacious Inſo-
lence?
Is it thy Mortal Enemy preſerves thee?
Rin. Yes, 'Tis my Mortal Enemy who-
e'er
Preſerves me from a glorious Death,
To ſee me live a curſed Life with Infamy:
Think of my Purple Rivals of the *Eaſt*.

What

What will they ſay? That they were all
diſdain'd for ———
Gods! I want Patience to ſupport the
Thoughts of it.
But if no Senſe of my Diſhonour moves thee,
Think of thy own; what will they ſay of
thee?
That you, ſo far beneath your ſelf deſcended,
To give a Wretch Poſſeſſion of your Soul,
Who vilely could renounce eternal Fame;
To ſquander an Inglorious Life away,
In a fond Woman's Arms.
If thou ſo little art concern'd for me,
I, who love thee beyond all Bounds, muſt
leave thee,
To vindicate thy Fame from bold Blaſ-
phemers;
And, carrying Terror to the very Courts
Of my Imperial Rivals, make them know,
That he alone was worthy of thy Choice,
Who had the Pow'r, when Duty call'd, to
leave thee.
Oh! wouldſt but thou, *Armida*, do thy Part,
And ſhew, by bearing this Departure greatly,
That ſhe of all her Sex was worthy me;
Who, in the furious Height of all her Love,
To Glory could reſign me.
Arm. Ay, Here's another Cauſe for my
detaining thee,
My Fame, as well as Love, requires thy Stay;
What would thoſe Monarchs ſay, ſhouldſt
thou deſert me?

How

How would they ſcorn the Weakneſs of my Choice,
Or Meanneſs of my Beauty?
Rin. Then to ſecure that Fame, lo, here I ſwear,
The Memory of what has paſt between us,
Shall in this Corner of the World lie buried;
In *Europe* and in *Aſia* unrecorded:
And That, of all the Actions of my Life,
Alone ſhall be forgotten.
Arm. Me wouldſt thou have, give Faith to thy falſe Oaths?
The very Breath that ſwears, declares thee perjur'd.
Am I to be forgot, as well as left?
Rin. You miſtake me.
Arm. Fate ne'er miſtakes, and, Traytor, is at Hand.
[*Thunder and Spirits approach.*
Rin. I thank thee; ſince for glorious Death I leave thee,
How could I ever hope to fall more greatly,
Than dauntleſs, in this dreadful Wreck of Nature?
Arm. So brave! His Greatneſs ſhakes my Soul! He frowns,
With congregated Clouds about his Brows,
As if he were the God who threw theſe Thunders;
And he commanded Nature.
Yes, thou ſhalt die, but not with ſo much Pleaſure
As fondly thou believ'ſt, for thou ſhalt die

Convicted; and Remorſe ſhall plague that Soul,
Which fear of Danger never could diſturb.
Canſt thou thy ſelf believe thou art not perjur'd?
Rin. Perjur'd!
Arm. Yes, Perjur'd!
Haſt thou not ſworn eternally to love me?
Rin. Well!
Arm. And yet haſt ſworn to leave me too for ever?
Rin. That is to ſay, I love thee with a Paſſion,
That hopeleſs, and in Abſence, will endure.
Arm. But thou art call'd, alas! And by whom call'd?
By Victory, by Fame, by Heav'n; fine Viſions!
By thy Satiety thou'rt call'd, falſe Man,
By the baſe Lightneſs of thy changing Temper.
Rin. You wrong me.
Arm. I do not; had Heav'n enjoin'd thee to depart,
Wou'd it command thee to appear Inhuman;
Sprung from a Rock, and by a Tygreſs nurſt?
For haſt thou, ſay, fetch'd one reluctant Groan?
Have not thy unrelenting Eyes been dry,
Yet ſeen my poor diſtracted Heart weep Blood?
Haſt thou ſo much as caſt one pitying Glance
On my hard Fortune? On my Fortune, ſaid I?

My

My dreadful Fate! my everlaſting Ruin!
And canſt thou falſly then affirm thou lov'ſt?
Do'ſt thou not now convicted fall a Traytor?
Begone, and meet the Fate which there attends thee.

Rin. Farewell.

Arm. What have I done? He goes to certain Death.
Stay; Haſt thou not one Word t'excuſe thy Crime?

Rin. Yes, yes, 'tis in my Power to juſtify myſelf,
To your Confuſion too; of that be certain.

Arm. Do it then.

Rin. No.

Arm. You muſt.

Rin. I'll die a thouſand Deaths firſt.

Arm. By Heav'ns, I feel I am a very Woman. [*Aſide.*
Rinaldo, If ever I was dear to thee;
If e'er I gave thee high and perfect Pleaſure;
Here, by its dear Remembrance, I conjure thee,
That thou wouldſt ſatisfy this laſt Requeſt;
Let me but know thou art not falſe,
And I ſhall die with Pleaſure.

Rin. O urge it not, if e'er thou lov'ſt *Rinaldo.*

Arm. Why?

Rin. In pity to us both.

Arm. Ha! now by Heav'n I long, I die to know it.

Rin. Yet, if thou lov'ſt *Rinaldo*, let it die with me,
Thou haſt, alas! endur'd too much already!
Why ſhouldſt thou ſtrive to know a Thing, which known,
Will break thy wretched Heart?
Arm. To break my Heart you muſt continue ſilent,
If I perſiſt to think thee falſe, I die;
Then ſpeak, and let me live.
Rin. Thou haſt o'ercome, but dread the fatal Conſequence;
Here I relax the violent Effort,
Which has thus far ſuppreſt the ſtruggling Paſſion,
That tore my very Vitals to get free.
I told thee that I lov'd thee, my *Armida*;
I told thee not how far, that thou ſhalt ſee;
Then with thoſe Eyes, that thro' the Stars ſee Fate,
Look upon mine, and thro' them, view my Soul;
Say, Do I love thee now, art thou yet ſatisfy'd?
Arm. Prodigious Alteration in a Moment!
Thou do'ſt not only love, but thou art Love;
Come to my Heart, and feel it leap to meet thee.
Rin. Why wouldſt thou urge me to this fatal Weakneſs,
That has undone us both? And why return it
With that bewitching Softneſs, which afreſh
Muſt plunge me in the Torments of the Damn'd?

Why

Why wouldſt thou ſharpen thus the cruel Sting,
Of that ſevere Neceſſity which now,
O curſed Hour! Eternally divides us?
[*Breaks from her.*

Arm. Ah Gods! Ah Wretch! Ah curſt perfidious Wretch!
Blaſt him, ye Lightnings, and, ye Furies, tear him;
The Traytor has diſſembled Tenderneſs,
To torture me the more.

Rin. Now, now, O all ye Heav'nly Pow'rs, defend me,
In this firſt dreadful Moment of my Life!
Not from the Danger of her potent Art,
But from myſelf, ye Eternal Pow'rs, defend me!

Arm. Now, now, *Tartarian* Deities, revenge me!
But hold; what Fury want I but my own?
Mine is the Wrong, the Vengeance ſhall be mine:
Die, Traytor. [*Holds up her Dagger.*

Rin. Do, ſtrike, and pierce thy Image here, ſo fix'd,
That nothing but a Dagger can remove it.
[*Preſenting his Breaſt.*

Arm. What has he ſaid? And canſt thou pierce him now?
I can, for his is a perfidious Tongue,
But then his Eyes, his Loveſick Eyes, ſpeak Truth;
I cannot hurt him with that melting Look:

Love in his Eyes defends him. Curſe on thy Tenderneſs,
Then pierce thyſelf, then ſtab him here.
[*Stabs herſelf.*

Rin. Oh Heav'ns!
What haſt thou done? The Dagger's in thy Boſom.

Arm. Could I oblige thee more?
Now I prevent thy barbarous Deſign;
This was the only Way, I had to abandon thee.

Rin. I have a Soul that loves, and dares like yours,
And thus ———

Arm. Ah hold, *Rinaldo*, hold, if I am dear to thee,
By that dear Love, I here conjure thee, hold!
Throw down that curſed Inſtrument of Death,
I can with Conſtancy ſupport my Wound;
I die to think of thine.

Rin. Ho! there; *Pheniſſa*, Help! *Ubaldo*, *Carlo!*

Arm. Alas! thou call'ſt in vain, I die, *Rinaldo.*

Rin. What will become of me? thou bleed'ſt to Death,
And yet no Succour's nigh.
Let me ſupport thy lovely fainting Limbs,
Back to the Palace where *Pheniſſa* waits thee;
Now, where's Ambition,

Arm.

Arm. If I wou'd Live, I want no Mortal Aid;
A Thouſand pow'rful Spirits round me wait,
Hark! how they, groaning all, deplore my Fate!
Hark! how their Lyres reſound a rueful Strain,
Which ſhews them ſenſible of all my Pain.
Rin. O Grief! O infinite Exceſs of Woe!
That makes the very Damn'd, with piercing Moan,
Lament our Sorrows, and forget their own.

The END *of the Fourth* ACT.

ACT V.

Enter *Rinaldo*, *Armida*, *Pheniſſa*.

RINALDO.

NOW you and Heav'n have perfected my Joy,
And all I wou'd have ask'd, prevented:
Thou haſt renounc'd thy Faith, renounc'd thy Art,
And thy Wound is not Mortal; my Friends too,
My Friends, will all be raviſh'd; I'll but ſeek them,
And with them, in a Moment, I'll return.

Arm. Wilt thou begone then?

Rin. I muſt, it is in Order to our Happineſs.

Arm. I know it, and yet, methinks, 'tis Death to part with thee.

Rin. It is but for a Moment.

Arm. But yet that Moment ſure will break my Heart.
How dolefully it beats with dying Blows?
As if with thee my very Soul departed.

How

How would eternal Separation plague me?
But ſee, *Rinaldo*, there, look here, *Pheniſſa!*
What mean theſe wing'd ill Omens of the Air,
That paſſing bruſh me with their deadly Pinions,
And ſeem the forlorn Hope of Fate?

Rin. I ſee nothing.

Phen. Nor I.

Arm. Is it poſſible? nor hear you any Voice?

Rin. None, but that Voice whoſe Muſick charms my Soul.

Arm. Nor you?

Phen. Nor I.

Arm. Hark! how it cries again, Prepare, *Armida*,
Diſpatch, we're grown impatient of Delay:
See, where we all ſtand ready to receive thee,
Aſſembled in the Air, we hov'ring ſtand,
And inſtantly expect thee.

Rin. What do I hear? Her Mind is much diſturb'd,
And Danger's imminent. I muſt be ſwift,
On Wings of Fear, which thou haſt lent, I'll fly,
And in a Moment with my Friends return.

Phen. My Lord. [*Juſt as he goes out.*

Arm. What want you?

Phen. Madam, I thought my Lord *Rinaldo* call'd,

Arm. Sure ſo he did, for ſee he turns this Way,

And

And ſeems to beckon to you;
Fly, to know what he wants.
[*She goes after him to the Door.*
Rin. Wants the Queen any thing, *Pheniſſa?*
Phen. No, my Lord.
Rin. Why am I call'd then?
Phen. My Lord,
I have ſomething of Importance to impart to you,
Which the Queen muſt not hear.
Rin. I am now in haſte, my impatient Friends expect me,
I'll inſtantly return. [*Exit.*
Phen. You will! why then the Sun, that all Things ſees,
Sees not a Wretch that's ſo forlorn as I am:
Return! for what! To bear the Queen to *Paleſtine?*
Whither muſt I tranſport myſelf? to *Syria?*
Without *Armida!* or to *Godfrey*'s Army?
Thou! thou the Mortal Foe to their Religion!
But ſuch *Armida* was! Renounce thy Faith!
Thou haſt a Queen's Example!
Suppoſe I ſhould? alas! I have an Art,
An Art, which Chriſtians utterly abhor,
And that, I never, never can renounce:
Her, all th' Infernal Powers obey'd, attracted
By ſupreme Knowledge, and by ſovereign Beauty!
For in her Face, they ſaw the bright Reflection
Of that refulgent Place, from which they fell:
But

But I, alas! O dire Remembrance! I
Am by indiſſoluble Contract bound.
This Voyage I muſt then obſtruct, or periſh!
Then his Return I muſt obſtruct, or periſh:
But the black Stratagem that Fate ſuggeſts,
Perhaps may touch *Armida*'s precious Life:
No, by Diſcovery of the Truth at laſt,
I can prevent that dire Calamity. ——

Arm. What ſays *Rinaldo?*

Phen. What ſaid your doleful Heart at his Departure?
What ſaid the wing'd ill Omens of the Air?
And what the Voices of the Eternal Beings?
Hear them once more! Ye Spirits, now aſſiſt me. [*Waves her Wand.*

Spirit *riſes and ſings.*

Spi. *Ah Queen! ah wretched Queen! give o'er,*
Ceaſe, ceaſe with hopeleſs Fire to burn,
Ah! ceaſe his Abſence to deplore:
Who now, even now, forſakes the Shore,
And never, never will return,
No never ſee thee more. [Sinks.

Phen. What ſay they now?

Arm. Gods! I am tortur'd, I am ſtung to Madneſs! [*Aſide.*
Let 'em ſay what they will, I'll not believe 'em.

Phen. Will you give Credit to *Rinaldo* then?
Since you muſt know what he himſelf has ſaid.

Arm.

Arm. Ah, Gods! and was it that?
Phen. And was it that? what cou'd it be but that?
Or what could he declare but that,
Which you were not to hear?
He coldly bad me comfort you.
Arm. Ah! Comfort from a Devil? but be huſh'd! [*Aſide.*
Be huſh'd, my Soul, but only for this Moment:
And be as mad as all the Winds the next.
And ye, ye Tyrant Gods, unleſs y' are pleas'd
To ſee Perfidiouſneſs paſs unreveng'd,
While thus you plague the Creature of your Hands,
Only for too much Truth, for too much Love;
Aſſiſt my enfeebled Arm this once, and then
Hurl all your Thunders at my wretched Head,
And take your willing Victim.
Phen. So, ſhe reſents it greatly:
I ſee a noble Fury in her Eyes.
Arm. Why then *Rinaldo*'s gone?
Phen. Moſt certainly.
Arm. Confuſion! I muſt now make haſte:
I ſhall be mad too ſoon elſe.
But how durſt you, my Slave! conceal his Treaſon?
How did you dare t'abet his damn'd Deſign?
Phen. To abet it!
Arm. Ay, how did you dare t' abet it?
Phen. Hell had ſuggeſted ——

Arm.

Arm. What?
Phen. Why, that you ———
Arm. Die, and conſult it better.
[*Stabs* Pheniſſa, *ſhe dies.*
So! 'twas exactly levell'd at thy Heart:
Would I had always taken Aim as juſtly.
And haſt thou thus forſaken me! what me!
Me, couldſt thou then forſake! Is't poſſible!
Me, that had laid out all my Soul upon thee!
That willingly, that gladly, would have dy'd for thee!
And could'ſt thou not be ſatisfy'd, unleſs
Thou murderſt me thyſelf! O wretched Man!
Can ye ſee this! ye Gods! and not Revenge it!
Revenge it then, Revenge it then, ye Devils!
Who with Abhorrency and Deteſtation,
Foretold this more than Deviliſh Act!
They hear thee not! my Spirits too have left me.
But behold!
Pheniſſa there lies dead! *Rinaldo*'s gone!
Whither muſt I go! Ha! where am I left!
Thrice has yon Planet wain'd, and thrice increas'd,
Since I came flying to theſe Iſles of Fortune:
In all which Time no Footſtep has appear'd,
Of any Human Creature here inhabiting.
Nor has one Sail been ſeen to dare the Winds
Upon this unknown Ocean! But this Morning
I ſeem'd to be the Darling Care of Heav'n!
The pow'rfull'ſt Queen of all the Eaſtern World!

The

The Adoration of Mankind: O dreadful
Change!
But have I not one Friend in Heav'n or
Hell?
Yes! one I have: then let him come! Come,
Death!
Come, thou moſt Generous of th' Immortal
Pow'rs!
The only God, that's true to the Unhappy;
Thus let me guide thee to my faithful Heart:
Take heed, how thou a ſecond Time miſtak'ſt!
Oh Gods! thou haſt a ſecond Time miſtaken!
And I have now not Strength enough t' aſſiſt
thee!
Yet haſt thou done thy Work! and tho'
thy Hand
Is ſlow, I find 'tis ſure. [*A Noiſe without.*
What's that a Noiſe!
The trampling ſure of Feet, which this
Way tend.
O all ye Pow'rs! the Chriſtians are returning!
Is it my Weakneſs that deludes my Eyes,
Or has the barbarous Man relented? Ha!
He has, he has! O all ye Eternal Pow'rs!
What have I done! Now, Death, forbear a
Moment!
That with my dying Breath I may upbraid
him:
That with my dying Breath I may forgive
him,
And that my Soul may, bleſſing him, expire.

Enter

Enter *Rinaldo*, *Urania*, *Ubaldo*, *Carlo*.

Ura. Not far from hence you know you left *Armida*.

The Stage is darken'd.

Rin. A very little further on the Right:
Upon a ſudden 'tis exceeding dark.
Ura. Yes, with a Darkneſs foreign to the Place:
A Fog, that ſteaming from the Mouth of Hell,
Doubles the Native Horrors of the Night:
Be cautious! cautious, how thou tread'ſt, *Rinaldo*;
Leſt, blindly guided by thy Head-ſtrong Love,
Thou ſtumbleſt on Deſpair!
Whom left you with *Armida?*
Rin. Pheniſſa.
Ura. Armida's Evil Genius bore that Name,
The Source of all her Woes.
Arm. Oh curs'd *Pheniſſa!* haſt thou then betray'd me!
Is't poſſible?
Carl. Angels, and all ye Hoſts of Heav'n, defend me!
What diſmal Shape is this?
[*Stumbling on* Pheniſſa.
Ura. The Remnant of that Wretch that was *Pheniſſa*.
Rin. Look down upon me, ye eternal Powers!
Pheniſſa! where! Oh where! *Ura.*

Ura. Where! here! Look, here *Rinaldo*,
Now ſee thou ſhew'ſt thyſelf a Man! a Man!
That's not enough. Be what thou art, a Hero!
And then with ſtedfaſt Eyes, and Heart, unſhaken,
Behold ill Fate lie there.

Rin. Oh! Oh!
Nor Man, nor Hero can ill Fate reſiſt,
And thus it tears me down; All-conquering Death,
Thou art indeed the griezly King of Terrors!

Ubal. Son of *Bertoldo!* be thyſelf this Moment.

Car. Think of thy Glory!

Ubal. Think of paſt Trophies, and of future Triumphs!

Car. Think that the Army of the Eaſt ſurveys thee!

Ura. Think that a Thouſand Demi-gods ſurround thee.

Rin. O my *Armida!*

Arm. And art thou come, my Hero! Art thou mine!
Take, take my fleeting Life! ye envious Pow'rs!
For Life with thee, exceeded Mortal Happineſs.

Rin. What wrought this dreadful Work of Fate!

Ura. Leave that Diſcovery to me, *Rinaldo!*
For know, that in Three Minutes ſhe expires.

Rin. Heart-rending ſound! has Heav'n expreſly form'd
My Soul, for her alone! and will it part us?

For

For ever part us! We'll not part a Moment:
Behold her with my Eyes! ye Heav'ns! and
ſpare her.
Ura. Thy Pray'rs are all deliver'd to the
Winds,
Heav'n hears not; and ſhe dies.
Rin. O ſad Reward of Conſtancy Divine!
Arm. 'Tis the dread Puniſhment of Law-
leſs Love!
Rin. Oh Faith! Oh matchleſs Truth! op-
preſt by Fate;
For Truth itſelf embody'd lies in thee,
And with its Beauty charms the admiring
World.
Ura. 'Tis not for Man to cenſure Heav'n's
Decrees;
As it knows how to puniſh, it can recompence?
By impious Arts, ſhe drew thee to her Arms!
No Sacred Rites prepar'd th' unlicens'd Way:
For which, by Heav'n's ſevere Decree, ſhe dies
A terrible Example.
But yet becauſe her Faith, her Truth, her
Conſtancy;
Seem'd to have more than Human Virtue
in them,
And ſhe expires Repentant;
Heav'n, that in all its Sacred Diſpenſations,
Makes the Perfection of its Juſtice ſhine;
A more than Mortal Recompence ordains
for them:
For after both your Mortal Dates are paſt,
Here in this bliſsful Region of the Air;
Thou ſhalt for ever live, with thy *Armida.*

Arm. Nay, then, you Pow'rs! you make
Amends for all:
Theſe, theſe are Sounds, which can make
Death delightful.
Ura. Thus, with the Motion of this ſacred
Wand,
I, in a Moment, drive away the Miſts
That cloud your Mortal Eyes.

Scene *opens, and diſcovers* Fame, Heroes *and*
Heroines *in the Clouds.*

And now behold!
If that your Eyes can bear Immortal Splendor,
Behold where, hov'ring on her Golden Wings,
Bright Fame illuminates her Godlike Equipage.
Heroes, and Heroines, in the Air aſſembled,
A Thouſand Glorious Forms that live in
Pleaſures;
To Mortals inconceivable:
With theſe you ſhall for ever live;
O'er theſe you ſhall for ever reign,
For ever reign united.
Arm. Thou kindeſt, deareſt, beſt of Men,
farewell!
I come, ye Pow'rs!
Rinaldo! let no Grief come near thy Soul:
In inſupportable Delight I die. [*Dies.*
Rin. Break, Heart, this very Moment!
Cruel Pow'rs!
Why am I ſuch a Wretch, that Death
avoids me:
Faith,

Faith, Beauty, Truth, and Conſtancy, farewell;
For a ſhort Time, farewell; farewell, ye Heroes,
Who in your Manſions of the Air expect me.
Death! who ſhou'd join me to you here, avoids me:
Then to *Jeruſalem* I'll fly, and there
Provoke him, and compel him, to unite me;
Eternally to You and my *Armida*.

Ura. There I'll proclaim, how He, who rules Above,
Takes ſevere Vengeance of Unlawful Love.

Exeunt Omnes.

EPILOGUE.

TO ſome fine Sparks, methinks, in yonder Rows,
The brave Rinaldo, *a Barbarian ſhows:*
His leaving for a Camp his Am'rous Care,
Is a rude Thing they'll ne'er forgive, they ſwear:
They ne'er could think ſo barb'rouſly, they ſay;
No, that Young Hero's mere Reverſe are they;
On his young Cheeks, Love's charming Pow'r abides,
While in his Manly Breaſt, the God of War reſides:
In their ſoft Hearts, Ten Thouſand Loves have Places;
But War's ſtern God, dwells on their dreadful Faces.
While the late War in all its Fury rag'd,
They ne'er with Gauls *in* Belgian *Plains engag'd:*
Nor Towring Fame on Alpine *Mountains ſought,*
But here, with frightful Looks, while others fought,
They guarded the weak Places they had Bought.
But You, who to your Country, and your Fame,
Great Souls! ſtill ſacrific'd your Am'rous Flame:
Who, in each Spring, the Seaſon of Deſire,
Left the bright Dames, that ſet your Souls on Fire,
To follow WILLIAM; *forcing* France *to yield,*
And hunting Glory thro' the Duſty Field;
You, ſure, with Pleaſure, ſhould Rinaldo *view,*
Who leſs deſerves Immortal Fame than You:
He flew from a polluted Beauty's Arms,
And from the Influence of malignant Charms.
You from ſuch Beauty, and ſuch Vertue flew,
As might enamour Gods as well as You.

And

EPILOGUE.

And you, Bright Nymphs ——
Whom for a Time the Noble Youths forſook,
With Pleaſure may on loſt Armida *look:*
Since by her Weakneſs, your high Merit ſhines;
And to your Praiſe, the rudeſt Heart inclines.
She, to retain her Hero in her Arms,
The utmoſt Force exerted of her Charms.
You, when their Glory ſummon'd yours away,
Your Looks rebated, and relax'd your Sway,
By which you force ev'n Savages t' obey.
Your Country's Happineſs you firſt deſign'd,
To that the Darlings of your Souls reſign'd,
And ſent them Death, or Victory, to find.
O Roman *Virtue! which, its Tryal paſt,*
Well merits the Reward it meets at laſt:
For ſince with Peace the Noble Youths return'd,
They for ſuch Worth with double Fires have burn'd.
May long Fruition but foment the Flames,
And be your Loves Immortal as your Fames.

THE USEFULNESS OF THE STAGE, TO THE Happineſs *of* Mankind, TO GOVERNMENT, AND TO RELIGION.

Occaſion'd
By a late Book written by *Jeremy Collier*, M.A.

By Mr. DENNIS.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE beſt Things here below, are liable to be corrupted, and the better Things are in their own Natures, the more miſchievous are they, if corrupted. For that which is ſuperlatively Good in itſelf, can be corrupted by nothing but extraordinary Malice. Since then the Stage is acknowledg'd by its greateſt Adverſaries, to be in itſelf good, and inſtrumental to the Inſtruction of Mankind, nothing can be more unreaſonable than to exhort People to ruin it, inſtead of reforming it, ſince at that Rate we muſt think of aboliſhing much more important Eſtabliſhments. Yet that is apparently the Deſign of Mr. Collier's Book, tho' his Malice infinitely ſurpaſſing his Ability (as it certainly does, whatever ſome People may think of him) his Performance is ſomewhat aukward. For in the Introduction to his Book, he gives you Reaſons why the Stage in general ought to be commended; in the firſt Chapters of his Book, he pretends to ſhew Cauſe why the Engliſh Stage ought to be reform'd; and in the ſixth and laſt Chapter, he pretends to prove by Authority, that no Stage ought to be allow'd.. In the beginning

beginning of his Book, he produces his own Reaſons why the Stage reform'd ought to be encou-rag'd, and in the End of the ſame Book, he brings other Mens Opinions to ſhew, that every Stage ought to be aboliſh'd; and ſo endeavours to ruin his own Reaſons by a long Scroll of other Peoples Authorities, which is certainly a pleaſant Con-deſcenſion; but ſuch is the fantaſtick Humility of pedantick Pride! And yet Mr. Collier *is very right, and very ſincere in his Reaſons, and very wrong, and very corrupt in his Authorities. As if he were ſo great an Enemy to the Truth, that he would ſuborn the very Dead, to deſtroy the Force of what he himſelf had aſſerted.*

If Mr. Collier *had only attack'd the Corrup-tions of the Stage, for my own Part, I ſhould have been ſo far from blaming him, that I ſhould have Publickly return'd him my Thanks: For the Abuſes are ſo great, that there is a Neceſſity for the reforming them; not that I think, that, with all its Corruptions, the Stage has debauch'd the People: I am fully convinc'd it has not, and I believe I have ſaid enough in the following Treatiſe to convince the Reader of it. But this is certain, That the Corruptions of the Stage, hinder its Efficacy in the Reformation of Manners. For, beſides that Vice is contrary to Virtue, it renders the Stage little and contemptible; for nothing but Virtue can make any Thing awful and truly great, and nothing but was is awful and truly great, can be univerſally reſpected, and by that means in a Condition to influence the Minds of the People. For this Reaſon, as I ſaid above, If Mr.* Collier

had

had only attack'd the Licentiouſneſs of the Stage, in ſo fair a manner as he ought to have done it, I had return'd him my Thanks; but when I found by his laſt Chapter, that his Deſign was againſt the Stage itſelf, I thought I could not ſpend a Month more uſefully, than in the Vindication of it.

My Buſineſs, therefore, is a Vindication of the Stage, and not of the Corruptions or the Abuſes of it. And, therefore, I have no further meddled with Mr. Collier's *Book, than as I have had Occaſion to ſhew, That he has endeavour'd to make ſome things paſs for Abuſes, either of the Stage in general, or of the* Engliſh *Stage particularly, which are ſo far from being Abuſes, that they may be accounted Excellencies.*

This little Treatiſe was conceiv'd, diſpos'd, tranſcrib'd and printed in a Month; and tho' on that very Account, it may not be wholly free from Error, yet this I can aſſure the Reader, That I have induſtriouſly endeavour'd not to err; tho' I verily believe that Mr. Collier *induſtriouſly endeavour'd to err, as far as he thought it might be conſiſtent with the Deceiving of others.*

The Method that I have uſed, has been this: I have endeavour'd to ſhew, That the Stage in general, is uſeful to the Happineſs of Mankind, to the Welfare of Government, and the Advancement of Religion: And under the Head of Government, I have endeavour'd to prove, that the Stage does not encourage Revenge, as Mr. Collier *aſſerts in his laſt Chapter; and that by encouraging Pride, which is another Thing that he charges upon*

upon it, it provides for the Happineſs of particular Men, and the Publick. I have endeavour'd to ſhew, too, in Defence of the Engliſh *Stage, that it is to be commended for its Impartiality, and exempting no Degree or Order of Men from Cenſure.*

I ſaw very well, that there was no proceeding any farther in the Vindication of it: For no Man can make any reaſonable Defence, either for the Immorality or the Immodeſty, or the unneceſſary wanton Prophaneneſs, which are too juſtly charg'd upon it. But for the particular Gentlemen which Mr. Collier *has attack'd in ſome particular Paſſages, which he has induſtriouſly cull'd from their Writings, I could make a very good Defence for ſeveral of 'em, if I were not ſatisfied that they were abler to defend themſelves.*

He has treated them, indeed, with the laſt Diſdain, and the laſt Contempt, not conſidering, that by doing it, he has treated all at the ſame rate, who profeſs an Eſteem for them, that is, all the Town. He has given them ſome Language which muſt be reſented by all who profeſs Humanity.

For, Mr. Collier *is ſo far from having ſhewn in his Book, either the Meekneſs of a true Chriſtian, or the Humility of an exemplary Paſtor, that he has neither the Reaſoning of a Man of Senſe in it, nor the Style of a Polite Man, nor the Sincerity of an Honeſt Man, nor the Humanity of a Gentleman, or a Man of Letters.*

THE

THE USEFULNESS OF THE STAGE.

CHAP. I.

That the STAGE *is Inſtrumental to the Happineſs of Mankind.*

NOTHING can more ſtrongly recommend any Thing to us, than the aſſuring us, that it will improve our Happineſs. For the chief End and Deſign of Man is to make himſelf happy. 'Tis what he conſtantly has in his Eye, and in order

order to which, he takes every Step that he makes: In whatever he does, or he does not, he deſigns to improve or maintain his Happineſs. And 'tis by this univerſal Principle, that God maintains the Harmony, and Order, and Quiet of the reaſonable World. It had indeed, been an Inconſiſtency in Providence, to have a made a Thinking and Reaſoning Creature, that had been indifferent as to Miſery and Happineſs; for God had made ſuch a one only to diſturb the reſt, and, conſequently, had acted againſt his own Deſign.

If then I can ſay enough to convince the Reader, That the Stage is inſtrumental to the Happineſs of Mankind, and to his own by conſequence, it is evident that I need ſay no more to make him eſpouſe its Intereſt.

I ſhall proceed then to the proving theſe Two Things.

Firſt, That the Stage is inſtrumental to the Happineſs of Mankind in general.

Secondly, That it is more particularly inſtrumental to the Happineſs of *Engliſhmen.*

The Stage is inſtrumental to the Happineſs of Mankind in general. And here it will be neceſſary to declare, What is meant by Happineſs, and to proceed upon that.

By Happineſs then, I never could underſtand any thing elſe but Pleaſure; for I never could have any Notion of Happineſs, that

that did not agree with Pleaſure, or any Notion of Pleaſure, that did not agree with Happineſs. I could never poſſibly conceive how any one can be happy without being pleas'd, or pleas'd without being happy. 'Tis univerſally acknowledg'd by Mankind, that Happineſs conſiſts in Pleaſure, which is evident from this, that whatever a Man does, whether in Spiritual or Temporal Affairs, whether in Matters of Profit or Diverſion, Pleaſure is, at leaſt, the chief and the final Motive to it, if it is not the immediate one. And Providence ſeems to have ſufficiently declared, That Pleaſure was intended for our Spring and Fountain of Action, when it made it the Incentive to thoſe very Acts by which we propagate our Kind, and preſerve Ourſelves. As if Self-love without Pleaſure, were inſufficient for either; for, as I myſelf have known ſeveral, who have choſen rather to die, than to go through tedious Courſes of Phyſick; ſo, I make no doubt, but ſeveral would have taken the ſame Reſolution, rather than have ſupported Life by a perpetual Courſe of Eating, which had differ'd in nothing from a Courſe of Phyſick, if Eating and Pleaſure had not been Things inſeparable. Now as 'tis Pleaſure that obliges Man to preſerve himſelf, it is the very ſame that has ſometimes the Force to prevail upon him to his own Deſtruction. For, as Monſieur *Paſcal* obſerves, The very Men who Hang, and who Drown themſelves, are inſtigated

ſtigated by the ſecret Pleaſure which they have, from the Thought that they ſhall be freed from Pain.

Since therefore, Man, in every Thing that he does, propoſes Pleaſure to himſelf, it follows, that in Pleaſure conſiſts his Happineſs. But tho' he always propoſes it, he very often falls ſhort of it; for Pleaſure is not in his own Power, ſince, if it were, it would follow from thence, that Happineſs were in his Power. The Want of which has been always the Complaint of Men, both Sacred and Secular, in all Ages, in all Countries, and in all Conditions. *Man that is born of a Woman is but of few Days, and full of Trouble*, ſays *Job*, ch. xiv. ver. 1. Of the ſame Nature are the Two Complaints of *Horace*, which are ſo fine, and ſo poetical, and ſo becoming of the beſt Antiquity.

Scandit æratas vitioſa naves
Cura; nec turmas equitum relinquit,
Ocyor cervis, & agente nimbos
Ocyor Euro. Hor. Ode 16. Lib. 2.

And that other, in the Firſt Ode of the Third Book.

——— *Timor, & minæ*
Scandunt eodem, quo dominus: neque
Decedit æratâ triremi, &
Poſt equitem ſedet atra cura.

In

In ſhort, they who have made the moſt Reflections on it, have been the moſt ſatisfy'd of it; and, above all, Philoſophers, who, by the voluminous Inſtructions, by the laborious Directions, which they have left to Poſterity, have declared themſelves ſenſible, that to be happy, is a very difficult Thing.

And the Reaſon why they, of all Men, have always found it ſo difficult, is, becauſe they always propounded to owe their Happineſs to Reaſon, though, one would think, that Experience might have convinc'd them of the Folly of ſuch a Deſign, becauſe they had ſeen, that the moſt Thinking, and the moſt Reaſonable, had always moſt complain'd.

For Reaſon may often afflict us, and make us miſerable, by ſetting our Impotence, or our Guilt, before us; but that which it generally does, is the maintaining us in a languiſhing State of Indifference, which, perhaps, is more remov'd from Pleaſure, than it is from Affliction, and which may be ſaid to be the ordinary State of Men.

It is plain then, that Reaſon, by maintaining us in that State, is an Impediment to our Pleaſure, which is our Happineſs: For to be pleas'd, a Man muſt come out of his ordinary State; Now nothing in this Life can bring him out of it, but Paſſion alone, which Reaſon pretends to combat.

Nothing but Paſſion, in effect, can pleaſe us, which every one may know by Experience: For when any Man is pleas'd, he may find by Reflection, that at the ſame Time he is mov'd. The Pleaſure that any Man meets with oftenest, is the Pleaſure of Senſe. Let any one examine himſelf in that, and he will find, that the Pleaſure is owing to Paſſion; for the Pleaſure vaniſhes with the Deſire, and is ſucceeded by Loathing, which is a ſort of Grief.

Since nothing but Pleaſure can make us happy, it follows, that to be very happy, we muſt be much pleas'd; and ſince nothing but Paſſion can pleaſe us, it follows, that to be very much pleas'd, we muſt be very much mov'd; This needs no Proof, or, if it did, Experience would be a very convincing one; ſince any one may find, when he has a great deal of Pleaſure, that he is extremely mov'd.

And that very Height and Fulneſs of Pleaſure which we are promis'd in another Life, muſt, we are told, proceed from Paſſion, or ſomething which reſembles Paſſion. At leaſt, no Man has ſo much as pretended that it will be the Reſult of Reaſon. For we ſhall then be deliver'd from theſe mortal Organs, and Reaſon ſhall then be no more. We ſhall then no more have Occaſion from Premiſes to draw Concluſions, and a long Train of Conſequences; for, becoming all Spirit, and all Knowledge, we ſhall ſee

Things

Things as they are: We ſhall lead the glorious Life of Angels, a Life exalted above all Reaſon, a Life conſiſting of Ecſtaſy and Intelligence.

Thus is it plain, that the Happineſs, both of this Life and the other, is owing to Paſſion, and not to Reaſon. But though we can never be happy by the Force of Reaſon, yet, while we are in this Life, we cannot poſſibly be happy without it, or againſt it. For ſince Man is by his Nature a reaſonable Creature, to ſuppoſe Man happy againſt Reaſon, is to ſuppoſe him happy againſt Nature, which is abſurd and monſtrous. We have ſhewn, that a Man muſt be pleas'd, to be happy, and muſt be mov'd, to be pleas'd; and that to pleaſe him to a Height, you muſt move him in proportion: But then the Paſſions muſt be rais'd after ſuch a manner, as to take Reaſon along with them. If Reaſon is quite overcome, the Pleaſure is neither long, nor ſincere, nor ſafe. For how many that have been tranſported beyond their Reaſon, have never more recover'd it? If Reaſon reſiſts, a Man's Breaſt becomes the Seat of Civil War, and the Combat makes him miſerable. For the Paſſions, which are in their Natures ſo very troubleſome, are only ſo, becauſe their Motions are always contrary to the Motions of the Will; as Grief, Sorrow, Shame, and Jealouſy. And that which makes ſome Paſſions in their Natures pleaſant, is becauſe they move

with the Will, as Love, Joy, Pity, Hope, Terror, and ſometimes Anger. But this is certain, that no Paſſion can move in a full Conſent with the Will, unleſs at the ſame Time it be approv'd of by the Underſtanding. And no Paſſion can be allow'd of by the Underſtanding, that is not rais'd by its true Springs, and augmented by its juſt Degrees. Now in the World it is ſo very rare to have our Paſſions thus rais'd, and ſo improv'd, that, that is the Reaſon why we are ſo ſeldom throughly and ſincerely pleas'd. But in the Drama, the Paſſions are falſe and abominable, unleſs they are mov'd by their true Springs, and rais'd by their juſt Degrees. Thus are they mov'd, thus are they rais'd in every well-writ Tragedy, till they come to as great a Height as Reaſon can very well bear. Beſides, the very Motion has a Tendency to the ſubjecting them to Reaſon, and the very Raiſing purges and moderates them. So that the Paſſions are ſeldom any where ſo pleaſing, and no where ſo ſafe, as they are in Tragedy. Thus have I ſhewn, that to be happy, is to be pleas'd, and to be pleas'd, is to be mov'd in ſuch a manner, as is allow'd of by Reaſon; I have ſhewn too, that Tragedy moves us thus, and conſequently pleaſes us, and conſequently makes us happy. Which was the Thing to be prov'd.

CHAP.

CHAP II.

That the Stage is more particularly Inſtrumental to the Happineſs of Engliſhmen.

WE have ſhewn in the former Chapter, that all Happineſs conſiſts in Pleaſure, and that all Pleaſure proceeds from Paſſion; but that Paſſion to produce Pleaſure, muſt be rais'd after ſuch a manner, as to move in Conſent with the Will, and conſequently to be allow'd of by the Underſtanding; upon which we took an Occaſion to ſhew, That Thinking and Reaſoning People, as Philoſophers, and the like, have made moſt Complaints of the Miſery of Human Life, becauſe they have endeavour'd to deduce their Happineſs from Reaſon, and not from Paſſion. But another Reaſon may be given, and that is, That ſuch People, by reaſon of the Exactneſs or Moroſeneſs of their Judgments, are too ſcrupulous in the Allowance of the Paſſions; from whence it proceeds, that Things very rarely happen in Life, to raiſe their Paſſions in ſuch a Manner, as

to approve them to their Underſtandings, and, conſequently, to make them move in Conſent with their Wills. From whence it proceeds, that ſplenetick Perſons are ſo very unhappy, and ſo much harder to be pleas'd, than others, which is every Day confirm'd by Experience. Indeed, 'tis obſerv'd every Day in ſplenetick People, that their Paſſions move, for the moſt part, with a contrary Motion to that of their Wills, and ſo afflict them, inſtead of delighting them. Now, there is no Nation in *Europe*, as has been obſerv'd above a thouſand times, that is ſo generally addicted to the Spleen, as the *Engliſh*. And which is apparent to any Obſerver, from the reigning Diſtemper of the Clime, which is inſeparable from the Spleen, from that gloomy and ſullen Temper, which is generally ſpread through the Nation; from that natural Diſcontentedneſs, which make us ſo uneaſy to one another, becauſe we are ſo uneaſy to ourſelves; and laſtly, from our Jealouſies and Suſpicions, which make us ſo uneaſy to ourſelves, and to one another, and have ſo often made us dangerous to the Government, and, by conſequence, to ourſelves. Now the *Engliſh* being more Splenetick than other People, and, conſequently, more Thoughtful and more Reflecting, and, therefore, more Scrupulous in allowing their Paſſions, and, conſequently, Things ſeldom happening in Life to move their Paſſions ſo agreeably to their

Reaſons,

Reaſons, as to entertain and pleaſe them; and there being no true and ſincere Pleaſure, unleſs theſe Paſſions are thus mov'd, nor any Happineſs without Pleaſure; it follows, That the *Engliſh*, to be happy, have more need, than other People, of ſomething that will raiſe their Paſſions in ſuch a manner, as ſhall be agreeable to their Reaſons, and that, by conſequence, they have more need of the Drama.

CHAP. III.

The Objections from Reaſon anſwered.

BUT now we proceed to anſwer Objections, and to ſhew, that we deſign to uſe Mr. *Collier* with all the Fairneſs imaginable; I ſhall not only endeavour to anſwer all that may be objected from Mr. *Collier*'s Book, againſt what I have ſaid in the foregoing Chapters, in the behalf of the Stage; I ſay, I ſhall not only endeavour to anſwer this, after I have propounded it in the moſt forcible Manner in which it can be urg'd, but I ſhall make it my Buſineſs to reply to all that has been objected by other Adverſaries, or, that I can foreſee may be hereafter objected.

The Objections then, againſt what I have ſaid in Defence of the Stage in the foregoing Chapters, are, or may be, of Three Sorts.

Firſt, Objections from Reaſon.
Secondly, From Authority: And,
Thirdly, From Religion.

Firſt, then, I ſhall endeavour to anſwer what may be objected from Reaſon, *viz.* That tho' it ſhould be granted, that the Theatre makes People happy for the preſent, yet it afterwards infallibly makes them miſerable: Firſt, by nouriſhing and fomenting their Paſſions; and, Secondly, by indulging their Vices, and making them Libertines: And that 'tis neither the Part of a prudent Man, nor a good Chriſtian, to make choice of ſuch a momentary Delight, as will be follow'd by ſo much Affliction.

And, firſt, ſay the Adverſaries of the Stage, the Drama tends to the making of People unhappy, becauſe it nouriſhes and foments thoſe Paſſions, that occaſion the Follies and Imprudences, from whence come all their Misfortunes. And,

Firſt, It indulges Terror and Pity, and the reſt of the Paſſions.

Secondly, It not only indulges Love where it is, but creates it where it is not.

Firſt then, ſay they, it indulges Terror, Pity, and the reſt of the Paſſions. For, ſays a certain *French* Gentleman, who is famous for

for Criticiſm, that Purgation which *Ariſtotle* mentions, is merely Chimerical; the more the Paſſions in any one are mov'd, the more obnoxious they are to be mov'd, and the more unruly they grow.

But, by Monſieur *De St. Evremont*'s Favour, this is not only to contradict *Ariſtotle*, but every Man's Daily Experience. For every Man finds, and every Man of Senſe particularly, that the longer he frequents Plays, the harder he is to be pleas'd, that is, the harder he is to be mov'd; and when any Man of Judgment, who has a long Time frequented Plays, happens to be very much touch'd by a Scene, we may conclude, That that Scene is very well writ, both for Nature and Art.

And, indeed, if People who have a long Time frequented Plays, are ſo hard to be mov'd to Compaſſion, that a Poet is oblig'd ſo to contrive his Incidents and his Characters, that the laſt ſhall be moſt deplorable, and the firſt moſt proper to move Compaſſion; may it not be very well ſuppos'd, that ſuch a one will not be over obnoxious to feel too much Compaſſion upon the View of Calamities, which happen every Day in the World, when they, and the Perſons to whom they happen, may not ſo much as once in an Age, have all the Qualifications that are requir'd extremely to touch him?

But, Secondly, whereas it is urg'd, that the Drama, and particularly Tragedy, mani-

manifeſtly indulges Love where it is, and creates it where it is not; To this I anſwer, That the Love which is ſhewn in a Tragedy, is lawful and regular, or it is not. If it is not, why then in a Play, which is writ as it ſhould be (for I pretend not to defend the Errors or Corruptions of the Stage) it is ſhewn unfortunate in the Cataſtrophe, which is ſufficient to make an Audience averſe from engaging in the Exceſſes of that Paſſion. But if the Love that is ſhewn, is lawful and regular, nothing makes a Man happier than that Paſſion. I ſpeak even of that immediate Pleaſure which attends the Paſſion itſelf. And as it certainly makes him happy for the preſent, ſo there is no Paſſion, which puts a Man upon Things that make him happier for the future. For as People have, for the moſt part, a very high Opinion of the beloved Object, it makes them endeavour to become worthy of it, and to increaſe in Knowledge and Virtue; and not only frequently reclaims them from ſome groſſer Pleaſures, of which they were fond before, but breeds in them an utter Deteſtation of ſome unnatural Vices, which have been ſo much in uſe in *England*, for theſe laſt Thirty Years.

But now we come to the Second pretended Reaſon, why the Drama tends to the making of Men unhappy, and that is, ſay the Adverſaries of the Stage, becauſe it encourages and indulges their Vices. To which I anſwer,

That

That the Drama, and particularly Tragedy, in its Purity, is ſo far from having that Effect, that it muſt of neceſſity make Men Virtuous; Firſt, becauſe it moderates the Paſſions, whoſe Exceſſes cauſe their Vices; Secondly, becauſe it inſtructs them in their Duties, both by its Fable, and by its Sentences. But here they ſtart an Objection, which ſome imagine a ſtrong one, which is, That the Nation has been more corrupted ſince the Eſtabliſhment of the Drama, upon the Reſtoration, than ever it was before. To which I anſwer,

Firſt, That that Corruption of Manners, tho' it ſhould be granted to proceed from the Stage, can yet only proceed from the licentious Abuſes of it, which no Man pretends to defend. But,

Secondly, We affirm, That this Corruption of Manners cannot be reaſonably ſaid to proceed, no not even from thoſe palpable Abuſes of the Stage, which we will not pretend to vindicate.

Firſt, For if the Corruption of Manners proceeded from the Abuſes of the Stage, how comes it paſs, that we never heard any Complaint of the like Corruption of Manners, before the Reſtoration of *Charles* II. ſince it is plain, from Mr. *Collier*'s Book, that the Drama flouriſh'd in the Reign of King *James* I. and flouriſh'd with the like Licentiouſneſs? But,

Secondly,

Secondly, If this general Corruption of Manners is to be attributed to the Abuſes of the Stage, from hence it will follow, that there ſhould be the greateſt Corruption of Manners, where the Theatres are moſt frequented, or moſt licentious, which is not true; for in *France* the Theatres are leſs licentious than ours, and yet the Corruption of Manners is there as great, if you only except our Drinking, which, as I ſhall prove anon, can never proceed from any Encouragement of the Stage. In *Germany*, and in *Italy*, the Theatres are leſs frequented: For in *Italy* they ſeldom have Plays, unleſs in the Carnival; and in moſt of the little *German* Sovereignties, they have not conſtant Theatres. And yet in *Germany* they drink more, and in *Italy* they are more intemperate in the Uſe of Women and unnatural Vices.

But, Thirdly, The Corruption of Manners upon the Reſtoration, appear'd with all the Fury of Libertiniſm, even before the Play-Houſe was re-eſtabliſh'd, and long before it could have any Influence on Manners; ſo that another Cauſe of that Corruption is to be inquir'd after, than the Re-eſtabliſhment of the Drama; and that can be nothing but that beaſtly Reformation, which, in the Time of the late Civil Wars, was begun at the Tail, inſtead of the Head and the Heart; and which oppreſt and perſecuted Mens Inclinations, inſtead of correcting and converting them, which afterwards broke out with the

the ſame Violence, that a raging Fire does upon its firſt getting Vent. And that which gave it ſo licentious a Vent was, not only the Permiſſion, but the Example of the Court, which, for the moſt part, was juſt arriv'd from Abroad with the King, where it had endeavour'd, by Foreign Corruption, to ſweeten, or, at leaſt, to ſoften Adverſity, and having ſojourn'd for a conſiderable Time, both at *Paris*, and in the *Low-Countries*, united the Spirit of the *French* Whoring, to the Fury of the *Dutch* Drinking. So that the Poets who writ immediately after the Reſtoration, were obliged to humour the deprav'd Taſtes of their Audience. For as an impenitent Sinner, that ſhould be immediately tranſported to Heaven, would be incapable of partaking of the Happineſs of the Place, becauſe his Inclinations and Affections would not be prepar'd for it; ſo if the Poets of theſe Times had writ in a Manner purely inſtructive, without any Mixture of Lewdneſs, the Appetites of the Audience were ſo far debauch'd, that they would have judg'd the Entertainment inſipid; ſo that the Spirit of Libertiniſm, which came in with the Court, and for which the People were ſo well prepar'd, by the Sham Reformation of Manners, caus'd the Lewdneſs of their Plays, and not the Lewdneſs of Plays, the Spirit of Libertiniſm. For 'tis ridiculous to aſſign a Cauſe of ſo long a ſtanding, to ſo new, ſo ſudden, and ſo extraordinary an Effect,

Effect, when we may aſſign a Cauſe ſo new, ſo probable, and unheard of before, as the Inclinations of the People, returning with Violence to their natural Bent, upon the Encouragement and Example of a Court, that was come Home with all the Corruptions of a Foreign Luxury; ſo that the Sham Reformation being, in a great meaſure, the Cauſe of that Spirit of Libertiniſm, which with ſo much Fury came in with King *Charles* the Second; and the putting down the Play-Houſe, being part of that Reformation; 'tis evident, that the Corruption of the Nation is ſo far from proceeding from the Play-Houſe, that it partly proceeds from having no Plays at all.

Fourthly, That the Corruption of Manners, is not to be attributed to the Licentiouſneſs of the Drama, may appear from the Conſideration of the reigning Vices, I mean, thoſe moral Vices which have more immediate Influence upon Mens Conduct, and, conſequently, upon their Happineſs. And thoſe are chiefly Four.

1. The Love of Women.
2. Drinking.
3. Gaming.
4. Unnatural Sins.

For Drinking and Gaming, their Exceſſes cannot be reaſonably charg'd upon the Stage, for the following Reaſons.

First,

First, Becauſe it cannot poſſibly be conceiv'd, that ſo reaſonable a Diverſion as the Drama, can encourage or incline Men to ſo unreaſonable a one, as Gaming, or ſo brutal a one, as Drunkenneſs.

Secondly, Becauſe theſe Two Vices have been made odious and ridiculous by our Plays, inſtead of being ſhewn agreeable. As for Drunkenneſs, to ſhew the Sinner, is ſufficient to diſcredit the Vice; for a Drunkard, of neceſſity, always appears either odious, or ridiculous. And for a Gameſter, I never knew one ſhewn in a Play, but either as a Fool, or a Raſcal.

Thirdly, Becauſe thoſe Two Vices flouriſh in Places that are too remote, and in Perſons that are too abject to be encourag'd or influenc'd by the Stage. There is Drinking and Gaming in the furtheſt *North*, and the furtheſt *Weſt*, among Peaſants, as well as among Dukes and Peers. But here, perhaps, ſome viſionary Zealot will urge, that theſe Two Vices, even in theſe remote Places, and theſe abject Perſons, proceed from the Influence of that Irreligion, which is caus'd by the Corruptions of the Stage, and will, with as much Reaſon, and as much Modeſty, deduce the Lewdneſs which is tranſacted in the Tin-Mines in *Cornwall*, and in the Coal-Pits of *Newcaſtle*, from the Daily Abominations of the Pits of the Two Play-Houſes, as he would derive the Brutality

of

of the *High-Dutch* Drinking, from the Prophaneneſs of our *Engliſh* Drama.

But what will they ſay then, to thoſe Gentlemen, who neither are ſuppos'd to go to our Theatres, nor to converſe much with thoſe who do, nor to be liable to be corrupted by them? what will they ſay to theſe Gentlemen, if they can be prov'd to have a conſiderable Share in the Two fore-mention'd Vices? What can they anſwer? For it would be ridiculouſly abſurd to reply, That the Clergy are corrupted by the Laity, whom it is their Buſineſs to convert. But here I think myſelf oblig'd to declare, that I, by no means, deſign this as a Reflection upon the Church of *England*, who, I am ſatisfy'd, may more juſtly boaſt of its Clergy, than any other Church whatſoever; a Clergy, that are equally Illuſtrious for their Piety, and for their Learning: Yet may I venture to affirm, that there are ſome among them, who can never be ſuppos'd to have been corrupted by Play-Houſes; who yet turn up a Bottle oftner, than they do an Hour-Glaſs; who box about a pair of Tables with more Fervour, than they do their Cuſhions; contemplate a pair of Dice more frequently, than the Fathers, or Councils, and meditate and depend upon *Hazard*, more than they do upon *Providence*.

And as for that unnatural Sin, which is another growing Vice of the Age, it would be monſtrous to urge, that it is, in the leaſt, en-

encourag'd by the Stage; for it is either never mentioned there, or mentioned with the laſt Deteſtation.

And now, laſtly, for the Love of Women, fomented by the Corruption, and not by the genuine Art of the Stage; tho' the Augmenting and Nouriſhing of it cannot be defended, yet it may be, in ſome meaſure, excus'd.

1. Becauſe it has more of Nature, and conſequently more Temptation, and conſequently leſs Malice, than the preceding Three, which the Drama does not encourage.

2. Becauſe it has a Check upon the other Vices, and peculiarly upon that unnatural Sin, in the Reſtraining of which, the Happineſs of Mankind is, in ſo evident a Manner, concerned.

So that of the Four Moral reigning Vices, the Stage encourages but one, which, as it has been prov'd to be the leaſt of them all, ſo it is the leaſt contagious, and the leaſt univerſal. For in the Country, Fornication and Adultery are ſeldom heard of, whereas Drunkenneſs rages in almoſt every Houſe there: From all which it appears, how very unreaſonable it is, to charge the Lewdneſs of the Times upon the Stage, when it is evident, that of the Four reigning Moral Vices, the Stage encourages but one, and that, the leaſt of the Four, and the leaſt univerſal, and a Vice which has a Check

upon the other Three, and particularly upon that amongſt them, which is moſt oppoſite, and moſt deſtructive to the Happineſs of Mankind.

CHAP. IV.

The Objections from Authority anſwered.

IN the next Place, we come to anſwer the Objections Mr. *Collier* has brought from Authority. The Authorities which he has produc'd, are, indeed, very numerous; yet only Four of them can be reduc'd under this Head, without running into Confuſion: Two Poets, and Two Philoſophers.

The Poets are *Ovid*, and Mr. *Wycherley*; the Philoſophers, *Plutarch*, and *Seneca*.

The firſt of them is *Ovid*, in his Book *De Arte Amandi*, and in his Book *De Remedio Amoris*. We have already anſwered the laſt, in the preceding Chapter, and ſhall now ſay ſomething to the Firſt. The Paſſage is this:

Sed tu præcipuè Curvis Venare Theatris
Hæc loca ſunt votis fertiliora tuis.
Illic invenies quod ames, quod ludere poſſis,
Quodque ſemel tangas, quodque tenere velis.

From

From whence Mr. *Collier* makes this ſhrewd Remark, That the Theatre is the propereſt Place in the World to meet, or to find a Miſtreſs, and that ſeveral People go thither on Purpoſe. In anſwer to this, I deſire the Reader to peruſe the Verſes which precede.

Nec fuge niligine Memphitica Templa Juvenca
Multas illa facit quod fuit illa Jovi.

And have we not here a merry Perſon, who brings an Authority againſt going to Theatres, which is as direct againſt going Church? Nay, and upon the very ſame Account too! But the Poet ſpeaks here of a Heathen Temple, ſays Mr. *Collier.* Well, and ſo he does of a Heathen Theatre. But what he ſays of the *Roman* Theatre, is exactly applicable to ours: And what Reply can be made to that, ſays Mr. *Collier?* What? Why, I wiſh to God that no Reply could be made to it. But beſides, if ſeveral People go to our Theatres purpoſely to meet, or to find out a Miſtreſs, I think it is plain, that if there were no Theatres, they would go to other Places: Eſpecially, ſince, as we hinted above, when the Theatres are ſhut, they frequent other Aſſemblies upon the ſame Deſigns. But tho' ſome People go to the Theatre to meet their Miſtreſſes, yet it is evident that moſt go to ſee the Play, who, if they could not have that Diverſion,

would, not improbably, go to other Places, with far worſe Intentions.

The next who is produc'd againſt the Stage, is Mr. *Wycherley*, much, I dare ſay, againſt the Aſſent, either of his Will, or his Underſtanding: But only for a Jeſt in that admirable Epiſtle, which is prefix'd to the *Plain Dealer*. However, even that Jeſt, let it be never ſo much o'er-ſtrain'd, can never be brought to convince us of any Thing, but the Abuſes of the Theatre, which I do not pretend to defend; and I thought Mr. *Wycherley* had more than made Amends for it, by expoſing Adultery, and making it the immediate Cauſe of *Olivia*'s Misfortune, in that excellent Play, which is a moſt inſtructive, and a moſt noble Satire upon the Hypocriſy and Villainy of Mankind: Mr. *Wycherley* being, indeed, almoſt the only Man alive who has made Comedy inſtructive in its Fable; almoſt all the reſt, being contented to inſtruct by their Characters.

But what Mr. *Collier* has ſaid of Mr. *Wycherley*, is ſufficient to ſhew us what Candor, nay, and what Juſtice we are to expect from this Cenſurer of the Stage. For in giving Mr. *Wycherley*'s Character, he has ſhewn himſelf invidious and detracting, even in his Commendation. For the beſt Thing that he can afford to ſay of the greateſt of our Comick Wits, is, That he is a Man of good Senſe. Which puts me in Mind of a Father

a Father in *France*, over-hearing his Son ſaying of the Mareſchal *de Turenne*, *Ma foy, Je trouve Monſieur de Turenne, un Joly Homme: Et vous, mons Fils*, replies the Father, *je vous trouve un Joly Sot de parler ainſi, du plus grand Homme que la France a porte.* How unworthy was it to commend Mr. *Wycherley* for a Thing, which, tho' certainly he has in a very great Degree, yet is common to him with a Thouſand more; and to take no notice of thoſe extraordinary Qualities which are peculiar to him alone; his Wit, his Penetration, his Satire, his Art, his Characters, and, above all, that incomparable Vivacity, by which he has happily equall'd the Ancients, and ſurpaſs'd the Moderns!

But now let us paſs to the Philoſophers, I mean the Philoſophers who were not Poets; for no Man can be a good Poet, who is not a Philoſopher. He has cited *Plutarch* in Four ſeveral Places in his *Sympoſiacum*; his Book *De Audiendis Poetis*; his Treatiſe *De Gloria Athenienſium*; and his *Laconick Inſtitutions:* For the Two laſt, we ſhall ſay nothing to them, till we come to ſpeak of Government. In the Two firſt, Mr. *Collier* makes *Plutarch* ſay, that Plays are dangerous to corrupt young People, and, therefore, Stage-Poetry, when it grows too hardy, and licentious, ought to be check'd. But I doubt but to make it appear, that Mr. *Collier* has been guilty of Three Things in this very Citation, which are unworthy

the Candour of a Gentleman, or of a Man of Letters. Firſt, he has brought an Authority, which can only convince us, that this Philoſopher did not approve of the Licentiouſneſs of the Stage, which Licentiouſneſs we by no means deſign to defend: Such an Authority, I ſay, he has brought in a Chapter, deſign'd to ſhew, that the Ancients diſapprov'd of Plays, and the Stage in general. Secondly, he has made uſe of the Authority of *Plutarch* againſt the Stage; whereas, that Philoſopher has ſaid infinitely more in its behalf, than he has againſt it. Thirdly, he has from Two Tracts of *Plutarch*, ſlurr'd One Citation upon us, in the way of an Argument, which is very unlike the Reaſoning of that Philoſopher. For in the Firſt Part of the *Enthymene*, he makes *Plutarch* damn the Stage, and the Drama in general; and in the Second, conclude againſt them in particular. For Plays, ſays he, that is, *all* Plays, are dangerous to corrupt young People, and, therefore, *ſome* Plays ought to be check'd. And why does Mr. *Collier* make the Philoſopher argue after this Jeſuitical manner, when it is plain to any Reader, that has but common Apprehenſion, that ſince in the Second Part of the *Enthymene*, *Plutarch* condemn'd only ſome particular Plays; he only ſaid in the Firſt Part of it, that ſome particular Plays were dangerous? But let us proceed to *Seneca*. And ſince it highly concerns us, to give a full and ſatisfactory

factory Account of what is objected from him, let us cite him at length, as Mr. *Collier* tranſlates him. Seneca *complains heartily of the Extravagance and Debauchery of the Age: And how forward People were to improve in that which was naught. That ſcarce any-body would apply themſelves to the Study of Nature and Morality, unleſs when the Play-Houſe was ſhut, or the Weather foul. That there was no body to teach Philoſophy, becauſe there was no body to learn it. But that the Stage had Nurſeries, and Company enough. This Miſapplication of Time and Fancy, made Knowledge in ſo ill a Condition. This was the Cauſe the Hints of Antiquity were no better purſued; that ſome Inventions were ſunk; and that ſome Inventions grew downwards, rather than otherwiſe.* To which I anſwer, Firſt, That it is not likely that *Seneca* ſhould condemn the Drama, and the Stage in general, ſince it is ſo notoriouſly known, that he writ Plays himſelf. Secondly, That by what he ſays, it is evident, that he declaims only againſt the Abuſes of the Theatre; and thoſe ſuch Abuſes as have no relation to ours; as, for Example, The paſſing whole Days together in the Theatre, which the *Romans* oftentimes did. Thirdly, That if Mr. *Collier* would infer from hence, that our Theatres are Hindrances to the Advancement of Learning, we have nothing to do, but affirm, what all the World muſt conſent to, that Learning is now at a greater Height, than ever it was known in *England*.

What we have ſaid is ſufficient to confound Mr. *Collier*, but we will not be contented with that; for here we Triumph, here we Inſult, here we have a juſt Occaſion to ſhew the admirable Advantage of the Stage to Letters, and the incomparable Excellency of the Drama, and, in a more peculiar manner, of Tragedy, which ſeems purpoſely form'd and deſign'd for the raiſing the Mind, and firing it to that noble Emulation, which is ſo abſolutely neceſſary for the Improvement of Arts. This is a Truth which is confirm'd by the Experience of all Nations, of all Ages. For whether we look upon the Ancients or Moderns; whether we conſider the *Athenians* or *Romans*, or the *French*, or Ourſelves, we ſhall find that Arts and Sciences, have, for the moſt Part, begun, but all of them, at leaſt, begun to proſper, with the Stage; and that, as they have flouriſh'd, they have at laſt declin'd with it. And this we may affirm, not only of the more Humane Arts, Poetry, Hiſtory, Eloquence, of which the Theatre, is certainly the beſt School in the World; the School that form'd in a great meaſure, thoſe prodigious Diſciples, *Cicero* and *Demoſthenes*; but we may truly aſſert it of all other ſorts of Learning.

For before *Theſpis* appear'd in *Attica*, and reduced the Drama to ſome ſort of Form, which had nothing but Confuſion before him, they had neither Author nor Knowledge

ledge amongſt them, that could be eſteem'd by Poſterity: That little Knowledge which they had of Nature, is to us ridiculous. For Moral Philoſophy, they had no ſuch Thing, nor Orator, nor Hiſtorian. But as, ſoon after *Theſpis*, their Theatre began to flouriſh, all their extraordinary Men, in all theſe ſorts, appear'd almoſt together. Not only thoſe who adorn'd the Stage, as *Æſchylus*, *Euripides*, and the divine *Sophocles*; but thoſe Orators, Philoſophers, and Hiſtorians, who have ſince been the Wonders of all Poſterity, *Socrates*, *Plato*, *Xenophon*, *Ariſtotle*, *Pericles*, *Thucydides*, *Demoſthenes*, *Æſchines*; and of all their famous Authors who have deſcended to us, there was not one, that I can think of, but who was alive between the firſt appearing of *Theſpis*, and the Death of *Sophocles*. And, be it ſaid, in a more particular manner, for the Honour of the Stage, that they had no ſuch Thing as Moral Philoſophy before the Drama flouriſh'd. *Socrates* was the firſt, who, out of their Theatre, began to form their Manners. And, be it ſaid to the Immortal Honour of Tragedy, that the Firſt and Greateſt of all the Moral Philoſophers, not only frequented their Theatres, but was employed in Writing Tragedies.

And as among the *Athenians*, Eloquence, Hiſtory, and Philoſophy, (I ſpeak of the Moral which is the only ſolid, certain Philoſophy) appear'd and flouriſh'd, upon the

Flouriſhing

Flouriſhing of the Stage, ſo with the Stage they at laſt declin'd; for not one of their famous Writers have deſcended to us, who was born after the Drama was come to Perfection; that is, after the full Eſtabliſhment of the new Comedy.

As Dramatick Poetry was the firſt kind of Writing that appear'd among the *Athenians*; ſo I defy the moſt skilful Man in Antiquity, to name ſo much as one Author among the *Romans*, till Dramatick Poetry appear'd at *Rome*, introduc'd by *Livius Andronicus*, above Five hundred Years after the Building of the City. But when their Stage began to be cultivated, immediately a Hundred Writers aroſe, in Poetry, Eloquence, Hiſtory, and Philoſophy, whoſe Fame took an equal Flight with that of the *Roman* Eagles, and who, tranſmitting their immortal Works to Poſterity, continue the living Glories of that Republick, and the only ſolid Remains of the *Roman* Greatneſs. As with the *Roman* Stage, the reſt of their Arts were cultivated, and improv'd proportionably; as with that in the Age of *Auguſtus Cæſar*, about Two hundred Years from the Time of *Livius Andronicus*, they reach'd their utmoſt Height, ſo, with that, they declin'd in the Reigns of ſucceeding Emperors.

For the *French*, 'tis yet ſcarce a Hundred Years ſince *Hardy* firſt appear'd among them: And *Hardy* was the firſt who began to reform their Stage, and to recover it from

from the Confuſion in which it lay before him. And tho' I cannot ſay, that before that Time, the *French* had no good Writers, yet I may ſafely affirm, that they had but one, who was generally eſteem'd throughout the reſt of *Europe:* But to reckon all who have ſince been excellent in Poetry, Eloquence, Hiſtory, and Philoſophy, would certainly make a very long, and a very illuſtrious Roll.

'Tis Time to come at laſt to ourſelves: It was firſt in the Reign of King *Henry* VIII. that the Drama grew into Form with us: It was eſtabliſh'd in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, and flouriſh'd in that of King *James* I. And tho' I will not preſume to affirm, that before the Reign of King *Henry* VIII. we had no good Writers; yet I will confidently aſſert, that, excepting *Chaucer*, no, not in any Sort of Writing whatever, we had not a firſt-rate Writer. But immediately upon the Eſtabliſhment of the Drama, Three Prodigies of Wit appeared all at once, as it were ſo many Suns, to amaze the learned World. The Reader will immediately comprehend that I ſpeak of *Spencer*, *Bacon*, and *Raleigh*; Three mighty Genius's, ſo extraordinary in their different Ways, that not only *England* had never ſeen the like before, but they almoſt continue to this very Day, in ſpight of Emulation, in ſpight of Time, the greateſt of our Poets, Philoſophers, and Hiſtorians.

From

From the Time of King *James* I. the Drama flouriſh'd, and the Arts were cultivated, till the Beginning of our Inteſtine Broils, in the Reign of King *Charles* I.; when the Dramatick Muſe was baniſh'd, and all the Arts degraded. For what other ſort of Poets flouriſh'd in thoſe Days? Who were the Inſpir'd, the Celebrated Men? Why, *Withers*, *Pryn*, *Vickars*, Fellows whoſe Verſes were laborious Libels upon the Art and themſelves. Theſe were the firſt-rate Poets, and under them flouriſh'd a Herd of Scribblers of obſcurer Infamy: Wretches who had not Deſert enough to merit even Contempt; whoſe Works, like Abortions, never beheld the Light, ſtifled in the Dark by their own Friends, as ſo many Scandals upon Human Nature, and lamentable Effects of that univerſal Conſpiracy of Fools againſt Right Reaſon. And if any one pretends, that Sir *John Denham*, Sir *William Davenant*, Mr. *Waller*, and Mr. *Cowley*, writ many of their Verſes in the Time of the late Civil Wars; to him I anſwer, That what Mr. *Waller* writ, was but very little; and the other Three are notoriouſly known to have writ in a Country where the Stage and Learning flouriſh'd. So that nothing among us that was conſiderable, was produc'd in Poetry, in the Times of the late Civil Wars, if you except but the firſt Part of that admirable Satire againſt the Muſes mortal Foe, Hypocriſy, which yet neither did, nor

durſt

durſt appear, till the Reſtoration of the Drama.

We have ſeen what the Poets were, that flouriſh'd in thoſe diſmal Times; let us now ſee what were the Orators? Who were the cried up Preachers? Why, *Calamy*, *Caſe*, *Hugh Peters*, *Manton*, *Sibbs*. But what was produc'd in the other Sciences, that was worthy of Poſterity? What in Philoſophy? What in Hiſtory? What in Mathematicks? What could be expected, when only Hypocritical Fools were encourag'd, whoſe abominable Canting was chriſtned *Gift*, and their Dulneſs *Grace*?

But what ſort of Perſons have flouriſh'd among us ſince the Reſtoration of the Drama? Who have been they who have ſignaliz'd themſelves in the other kinds of Poetry? So great is the Number of thoſe who have writ Politely, that it is comprehenſive of all Conditions of Men. How many have been juſtly renown'd for Eloquence. So many extraordinary Men have diſtinguiſh'd themſelves by Preaching, that to enumerate them would be an endleſs Thing. I ſhall content myſelf with mentioning the late * Archbiſhop, and the † preſent Biſhop of *Rocheſter*, ſo illuſtrious for their different Talents, the one for his extreme Politeneſs, for his Grace

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* *Archbiſhop* Tillotſon.
† *Dr.* Thomas Sprat.

and

and his Delicacy; the other for his nervous Force; and both for their Maſculine Purity. Who among us are fam'd for Hiſtory? not only the laſt of thoſe great Prelates, but the * preſent Biſhop of *Salisbury*, whoſe Hiſtory of the Reformation is ſo deſervedly celebrated by the learned World, where-ever *Engliſh* or *French* is known. What Proficients have we in Philoſophy? what in Mathematicks? Let all *Europe* reply, who has read, and, reading, admir'd them. I ſhall content myſelf with mentioning Two of the living Glories of *England*, † Mr. *Newton*, and Mr. *Lock*; the one of which has not his Equal in *Europe*, and neither of them has his Superior.

Thus have I ſhewn you, how Poetry, Eloquence, Hiſtory, and Philoſophy, have appear'd, advanc'd, declin'd, and vaniſh'd with the Drama, not only in *Greece* and Ancient *Italy*, but in Modern *France* and *England*. So true it is, what was formerly ſo well ſaid, That all thoſe Arts which reſpect Humanity, have a certain Alliance, and a mutual Dependance, and are defended and ſupported by their common Confederacy.

Thus, while I am pleading in Defence of the Stage, I am defending and ſupporting Poetry, the beſt and the nobleſt kind of Writing.

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* *Dr.* Gilbert Burnet.

† *Now Sir* Iſaac Newton.

For all other Writers are made by Precept, and are form'd by Art; but a Poet prevails by the Force of Nature; is excited by all that's powerful in Humanity, and is, ſometimes, by a Spirit not his own, exalted to Divinity.

For if Poetry in other Countries has flouriſh'd with the Stage, and been with that neglected, what muſt become of it here in *England*, if the Stage is ruin'd? for foreign Poets have found their Publick, and their Private Patrons. They who excell'd in *Greece*, were encourag'd by the *Athenian* State, nay, and by all *Greece*, aſſembled at their *Olympian*, *Iſtmean*, *Nemean*, *Pythian* Games. *Rome* had its *Scipios*, its *Cæſars*, and its *Mecænas*'s. *France* had its magnanimous *Richlieu*, and its greater *Lewis*; but the Protection that Poetry has found in *England*, has been from the Stage alone. Some few, indeed, of our Private Men, have had Souls that have been large enough, and wanted only Power. But of our Princes, how few have had any Taſte of Arts! nay, and of them who had ſome, have had their Heads too full, and ſome their Souls too narrow!

As, then, in maintaining the Cauſe of the Stage, I am defending Poetry in general; ſo in defending that, I am pleading for Eloquence, for Hiſtory and Philoſophy. I am pleading for the reaſonable Pleaſures of Mankind, the only Harmleſs, the only Cheap, the

the only univerſal Pleaſures; the Nouriſhments of Youth, and the Delights of Age; the Ornaments of Proſperity, and the ſureſt Sanctuaries of Adverſity; now inſolently attempted by furious Zeal, too wretchedly blind to ſee their Beauties, or diſcern their Innocence. For, unleſs the Stage be encourag'd in *England*, Poetry cannot ſubſiſt; for never was any Man a great Poet, who did not make it his Buſineſs, as well as Pleaſure, and ſolely abandon himſelf to that. And as Poetry would be cruſh'd by the Ruins of the Stage; ſo Eloquence would be miſerably maim'd by them; for which, if Action be confeſs'd the Life of it, the Theatre is certainly the beſt of Schools; and if Action be not the Life of it, *Demoſthenes* was much miſtaken.

In Eloquence, I humbly conceive that the Pulpit is ſomething concerned, and, by conſequence, in the Stage; and need not be aſham'd to learn from that Place which inſtructed *Cicero*, and which form'd *Demoſthenes*. For I cannot forbear declaring, notwithſtanding the extreme Veneration which I have for the Church of *England*, that if, in ſome of our Pulpits, we had but Perſons that had half the Excellence of *Demoſthenes*, that had but half the Force of his Words, and the reſiſtleſs Strength of his Reaſoning, and but half his vehement Action, we ſhould ſee quite another Effect of their Sermons. Thoſe Divine Orators fulminating with

with their ſacred Thunder, would infix terrible Plagues in the Souls of Sinners, and rouze and awake to a new Life, even thoſe who are dead in Sin.

I now come to anſwer what is objected from Religion; and, that is, that though it ſhould be granted that ſome little Happineſs may be derived from the Stage, yet that there is a much better and ſurer Way to be happy: For the only Way to be ſolidly and laſtingly Happy, even in this Life, is to be truly Religious, the beſt Chriſtian being always the happieſt Man. To which I anſwer, That as the Chriſtian Religion contains the beſt, nay, the only Means to bring Men to eternal Happineſs, ſo for the making Men happy even in this Life, it ſurpaſſes all Philoſophy; but yet I confidently aſſert, that if the Stage were arriv'd to that Degree of Purity, to which in the Space of ſome little Time it may eaſily be brought, the frequenting our Theatres would advance Religion, and, conſequently, the Happineſs of Mankind, and ſo become a Part of the Chriſtian Duty, which I ſhall demonſtrate when I come to ſpeak of Religion.

The END *of the* FIRST PART.

THE USEFULNESS OF THE STAGE.

PART II.

CHAP. I.

That the Stage is useful to Government.

SINCE in the First Part of this Treatise, we have plainly demonstrated, that the Stage is instrumental to the Happiness of Mankind, and of *Englishmen* more particularly; and since it is self-evident, that the Happiness of those who are

governed, is the very End and Deſign of all regular Government, it evidently follows, that the Stage which contributes to the Happineſs of particular Men, is conducive to the Good of the State. However, I ſhall deſcend to ſhew more particularly, that the Stage is inſtrumental to the Welfare,

Firſt, *Of Government in general.*
Secondly, *Of the* Engliſh *Government more particularly.*
Thirdly, *Eſpecially of the preſent Government.*

Firſt, The Stage is inſtrumental to the Welfare of Government in general; which I ſhall prove,

1. By Reaſon: And,
2. By Experience.

And, firſt, I ſhall prove by Reaſon, that the Stage is inſtrumental to the Welfare of Government, and that whether you conſider thoſe who govern; or Secondly, thoſe who are governed.

Firſt, If you conſider thoſe who Govern.

And here it is ſelf-evident, that no Man who governs, can govern amiſs, as long as he follows the Dictates of common Reaſon. That requires that all who govern, ſhould conſult

conſult the Intereſt of thoſe who are govern'd, which is incluſive of their own. And thoſe Rulers have always been upon a wrong Foundation, who have had an Intereſt diſtinct from that of their People. Male-Adminiſtration has always its Source from the Paſſions or Vices of thoſe who govern.

The Paſſions which cauſe it, are for the moſt part Ambition, or the immoderate Love of Pleaſure. Now as Tragedy checks the firſt, by ſhewing the Great Ones of the Earth humbled; ſo it corrects the laſt, by firing the Mind, and raiſing it to ſomething Nobler.

The Vices which cauſe the Male-Adminiſtration of Governors, are either Vices of Weakneſs, or of Malice, the firſt of which cauſe Governors to neglect; and the laſt, to oppreſs their People. The Vices of Weakneſs are Inconſiderateneſs, and Effeminacy, Inconſtancy, and Irreſolution.

Now nothing can be a better Remedy than Tragedy for Inconſiderateneſs, which reminds Men of their Duty, and perpetually inſtructs them, either by its Fable, or by its Sentences, and ſhews them the ill and the fatal conſequences of irregular Adminiſtration; and nothing is more capable of raiſing the Soul, and giving it that Greatneſs, that Courage, that Force, and that Conſtancy, which are the Qualifications that make Men deſerve to command others; which is evident from Experience. For they who in all

Countries, and in all Ages, have appear'd moſt to feel the Power of Tragedy, have been the moſt deſerving and the greateſt of Men. *Æſchylas* among the *Athenians*, was a great Captain, as well as a Tragick Poet; and *Sophocles* was both an able Stateſman, and a Victorious General. If we look among the *Romans*, the very greateſt among them, were particularly they who appear'd ſo far touch'd by the Drama, as either to write their Plays themſelves, or to build their Theatre. Witneſs *Scipio*, and *Lælius*, and *Lucullus*, and the Great *Pompey*, and *Mecænas*, and *Julius*, and *Auguſtus Cæſar*.

No Man among the *French*, has ſhewn ſo much Capacity, or ſo much Greatneſs of Mind, as *Richlieu*; and no Man among them has expreſs'd ſo much Paſſion for the Drama, which was ſo great, that he writ ſeveral Plays himſelf, with that very Hand, which at the ſame Time was laying the Plan of the *French* univerſal Monarchy.

Among us the Drama began to flouriſh in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, and I have been told, That that great Princeſs, appear'd to be ſo far charm'd with it, as to tranſlate with her own Hand, a Tragedy from *Euripides*.

That Vice of Malice, which for the moſt Part cauſes the Male-Adminiſtration of Governors, is Cruelty, which nothing is more capable of correcting than Tragedy, which by diving into the hidden Springs of Nature, and making uſe of all that is powerful

powerful in her, in order to the moving Compaſſion, has been always found ſufficient to ſoften the moſt obdurate Heart.

Numerous Examples might be brought of this, but I ſhall content myſelf with that of *Alexander* the *Theſſalian* Tyrant, as the Story is related by *Dacier*, in the Preface to his admirable Comment on the Poetick of *Ariſtotle*. *This barbarous Man, ſays* Dacier, *cauſing the* Hecuba *of* Euripides *to be play'd before him, found himſelf ſo touch'd, that he went out before the End of the Firſt Act, ſaying,* It would be a Shame for him, to be ſeen to ſhed Tears for the Miſeries of *Hecuba*, or the Calamities of *Polyxena*: *For him, who every Day imbrued his Hands in the innocent Blood of his Subjects. The Truth of it was, that he had ſome Apprehenſion, leſt he ſhould be ſo far melted, that he ſhould be forſaken by that Spirit of Tyranny, which had ſo long poſſeſs'd him, and ſhould go a private Perſon out of that Theatre, into the which he had entered a Sovereign. Nay, he had like to have caus'd the Actor who had mov'd him thus, to be executed; but the Criminal was ſecured, by the very Remains of that Compaſſion, which was that only Crime.*

That which follows, is remarkable, and which *Dacier* cites from an ancient Hiſtorian. *A very grave Writer*, ſays *Dacier*, *makes a Reflection which is very much to my purpoſe, and which ſeems of Importance to Government. Speaking of the Inhabitants of* Arcadia, he ſays, *That their Humanity, and the Sweet-*

neſs of their Tempers, and the Reſpect which they had for the Gods; and, in a Word, the Purity of their Manners, and all their Virtues, proceeded principally from the Love which they had for Muſick, which by its Sweetneſs, corrected thoſe ill Impreſſions, which a raw and unwholſome Air, together with the Hardſhip they endured from their laborious way of Life, made on their Bodies, and on their Minds. And he ſays, on the contrary, *That thoſe of* Cynethus, *were carried to all ſorts of profligate Crimes, becauſe that they, renouncing the wiſe Inſtitutions of their Anceſtors, had neglected an Art, which was therefore the more neceſſary for them, becauſe they inhabited that Part of* Arcadia, *which was the Coldeſt, and where the Climate was moſt unequal.* Indeed, there was no Town in all *Greece*, ſays *Dacier*, that had given ſuch frequent Examples of enormous Crimes. And if *Polybius*, ſays he, ſpeaks this in the Behalf of Muſick, and accuſes *Ephorus*, for having advanc'd a Thing that was very unworthy of him, in aſſerting, that Muſick was invented on pupoſe for the Deceiving of Mankind: What may we not juſtly affirm of Tragedy, of which Muſick is but a little Ornament; and which as far tranſcends it, as the reaſoning Speech of a Man, excels the Brutes in articulate Voice, which never has any Meaning.

But now we come, in the Second Place, to ſhew, That the Stage is uſeful to Government, with reſpect to thoſe who are govern'd; and

and that, whether you conſider them in relation to thoſe who govern them; or to one another; or to the common Enemy.

If you conſider them in relation to thoſe who govern them, you will find that Tragedy is very proper to check the Motions, that they may at any Time feel to Rebellion or Diſobedience, by ſtopping the very Sources of them; for Tragedy naturally checks their Ambition, by ſhewing them the Great Ones of the Earth humbled, by ſetting before their Eyes, to make uſe of Mr. *Collier*'s Words, the Uncertainty of Human Greatneſs, the ſudden Turns of State, and the unhappy Concluſion of Violence or Injuſtice. Tragedy too, diverts their apprehenſion of Grievances, by the Delight which it gives them, diſcovers the Deſigns of their factious Guides, by opening their Eyes, and inſtructing them in their Duty by the like Examples; and, laſtly, it diſpels their unreaſonable Jealouſies; for People who are melted or terrified with the Sufferings of the Great, which are ſet before their Eyes, are rather apt to feel a ſecret Pleaſure, from the Senſe that they have, that they are free from the like Calamities, than to torment themſelves with the vain and uncertain Apprehenſions of Futurity. But the Stage is uſeful to Government, in thoſe who are govern'd, if they are conſidered with relation to one another. For Tragedy diverts them from their unjuſt Deſigns,

Deſigns, by the Pleaſure which it gives them; ſince no Man as long as he is eaſy himſelf, is in a Humour to diſturb others, and by purging thoſe Paſſions, whoſe Exceſſes cauſe their Injuſtice, by inſtructing them in their Duty by its Fable, and by its Sentences, by raiſing their Minds, and ſetting them above Injuſtice, by touching them with Compaſſion, and making them good upon a Principle of Self-love; and laſtly, by terrifying them, with ſetting before their Eyes, the unhappy Concluſion, to uſe Mr. *Collier*'s Words, of Violence and Injuſtice.

Thirdly, The Stage is uſeful to Government, by having an Influence over thoſe who are govern'd, in relation to the common Enemy. For nothing more raiſes and exalts their Minds, and fires them with a noble Emulation, who ſhall beſt perform their Duty: Which brings me to the Second Head, the ſhewing the Uſefulneſs of the Stage to Government in general: From,

II. Experience, and that of
1. The *Athenian*.
2. The *Roman*.
3. The *French*, and
4. The *Engliſh* Government.

1. For the *Athenians*; Their Drama firſt appear'd in Form with *Theſpis*, was cultivated by *Æſchylus*, and perfected by *Sophocles*. Now this is extremely remarkable, That

that

that People, which from *Theſeus* to *Theſpis*, that is, for the Space of about Seven hundred Years, continued a poor and ignorant, and comparatively, a contemptible People, in the Space of 100 Years more, in which Time their Tragedy was form'd by *Theſpis*, cultivated by *Æſchylus*, and perfected by *Sophocles*; I ſay, it is extremely remarkable, That in that Space of Time, this People, which before where ſo inconſiderable, became illuſtrious for Arts and Arms; renown'd for Eloquence; for Philoſophy famous; and for Empire formidable; the Maſters of *Greece*; the Scourges of *Aſia*; and the Terror of the great King.

In that Space of Time, flouriſh'd moſt of their mighty Conquerors, *Cimon*, *Ariſtides*, *Pericles*, *Themiſtocles*, and *Miltiades*. Their Tragick Poets were the Perſons who animated their Armies, and fir'd the Souls of thoſe brave Men, who conquer'd at once, and dy'd for their Country, in the Bay of *Salamis*, and in the Plains of *Marathon*; at which Place a Handful of Men, as it were, of the Diſciples of *Theſpis*, and the ſucceeding Poets, vanquiſh'd the numberleſs Forces of the Eaſt; laid the Foundation of the *Græcian* Empire, and of the Fortune of the Great *Alexander*.

The *Athenians* were highly ſenſible of the Advantage which the State received from the Theatre, which they maintain'd at a publick prodigious Expence, and a Revenue was appropriated to that peculiar Uſe; and eſtabliſh'd

bliſh'd a Law, which made the leaſt Attempt to alienate the Fund, Capital. So that when the common Exchequer was exhauſted, *Demoſthenes* was obliged to uſe the utmoſt Addreſs, to induce them to touch and divert this ſeparate Fund.

But 'tis Time to come to the *Romans*. *Livius Andronicus*, who was their firſt Dramatick Poet, appeared in the Five hundred and Fourteenth Year after the Building of the City. And till his Time, they had been ſtruggling, as it were, for Life with their Neighbours, and had been torn by perpetual Convulſions within themſelves; whereas after the firſt Repreſentation of the Plays which were written by him, they were not only quiet within themſelves, for above a Hundred Years after, but in a Hundred more, became the Maſters of the Univerſe. And who where the Perſons among them that advanced their Conqueſts, and extended their Empire? Why the very Men who built their Theatres, and who writ their Plays. *Scipio* conquered *Spain* and *Africa*, *Pompey* and *Lucullus*, *Aſia*, and *Cæſar*, *England*, *Flanders*, *France*, and *Germany*.

'Tis not a Hundred Years ago, ſince Dramatick Poetry begun to flouriſh in *France*, ſince which Time, the *French* have not only been remarkably united, but have advanced their Conqueſts ſo faſt, that they have almoſt doubled their Empire.

Cardinal

Cardinal *Richelieu* was the Perſon, who at the ſame Time laid the Foundation of the Greatneſs of their Theatre, and their Empire: And 'tis a ſurprizing Thing to conſider, That the Spirit of Dramatick Poetry, leaving them juſt before the Beginning of the laſt War, by *Moliere* and *Corneille*'s Death, and by *Racine*'s Age, they have ſince that Time, loſt almoſt half their Conqueſts.

To come home to ourſelves, Dramatick Poetry began to be brought into Form with us, in the Time of *Henry* VIII. and though ſince that Time, we cannot boaſt of ſuch glorious Succeſſes, as we had in the Times of our Fifth *Henry*, and of our Third *Edward*, when the Conquering Genius of *England*, in Triumph ſeem'd to beſtride the Ocean, and to fix an Imperial Foot on the Continent; yet this may be ſaid to the Advantage of the Drama, that ſince it firſt began to be cultivated, we have had our Eyes more open, have found that our Conſtitution is but ill deſign'd for Conqueſt; that by being very fortunate, we ſhould run the Riſque of becoming very unhappy, and endanger our Liberties, by extending our Empire.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

That the Stage is particularly uſeful to the Engliſh, *and eſpecially the preſent Government.*

WE have ſhewn in the foregoing Chapter, that the Drama, and particularly Tragedy, is among other Reaſons uſeful to Government, becauſe it is proper to reſtrain a People from Rebellion and Diſobedience, and to keep them in good Correſpondence among themſelves: For this Reaſon the Drama may be ſaid to be inſtrumental in a peculiar manner to the Welfare of the *Engliſh* Government; becauſe there is no People on the Face of the Earth, ſo prone to Rebellion as the *Engliſh*, or ſo apt to quarrel among themſelves. And this ſeems very remarkable, that ſince the Drama began firſt to flouriſh among us, we have been longer at quiet, than ever we were before, ſince the Conqueſt; and the only Civil War which has been amongſt us ſince that Time, is notoriouſly known to have been begun, and carried on by thoſe, who had an utter Averſion to the Stage; as on the other ſide, he who now diſcovers ſo great an

an Averſion to the Stage, has notoriouſly done all that lay in his little Power, to plunge us in another Civil War.

But the Stage is more particularly inſtrumental to the Welfare of our preſent *Engliſh* Government, as the Government is depending upon Two Things. 1. The Reformation; and, 2. The Revolution. I ſhall ſpeak of the Reformation when I come to treat of Religion. I ſhall ſhew at preſent that the Stage is advantageous to the Government, as it ſtands ſince the Revolution; and that will appear, if we conſider what People they are who frequent our Theatres. And they are either Friends to the Government, or Enemies, or indifferent Perſons. They who are Friends to it, are for the moſt part ſo, becauſe it defends and maintains the Liberties of the People. But Liberty is a Jeſt if you take away reaſonable Pleaſure; for what would ſignifie Liberty, if it did not make me happier than him who is not free?

Machiavel ſays, in the 19th Chapter of his *Prince*, that nothing renders a Prince ſo odious, as the taking Poſſeſſion of the Wives and Eſtates of his People; that is, nothing renders him ſo odious, as the Depriving his Subjects of their lawful and reaſonable Pleaſures; for no Man's Wife or Eſtate is dear to him, any further than as they contribute to his Pleaſure, and to his Happineſs. Now that the Drama is of the Number of lawful and reaſonable Pleaſures, has been,

and

and ſhall be proved; and has been all along implied, not only by the Connivance, but by the Authority and the Command of ſo many of our Monarchs; the Protection of ſo many illuſtrious Princes; and the Support and Encouragement of ſo many extraordinary Men, who have compos'd for ſo long together, the great Councils of the Nation, whoſe united Judgment ought certainly to be preferr'd before the pretended Opinions of Two or Three unknown Bigots; who, under the Auſterity of their affected Grimaces, are carrying forward their dark Deſigns, and could never do a Thing, upon which they would eſteem themſelves more, than upon depriviug the Government of any of its faithful Friends. And it is more than probable, that ſome of its Friends would prove averſe to it, if the Stage were either ſuppreſs'd, or very much diſcouraged. But in the next Place, the Stage is of uſe to the Government, if you conſider its Enemies; for it gives the Enemies of the State a conſiderable Diverſion. People will not ſo furiouſly deſire a Change, as long as they live agreeably. Men muſt be uneaſy ſome way or other in their manner of living, before they come to private Cabals and Plotting. They who are happy, appear averſe to them, and to frequenting Jacobite Conventicles, and to contributing to our nonſwearing Parſons. *Hinc illæ Lachrymæ!* from hence comes the impotent

Impotent Rage of our Foes, from hence their diſſembled Zeal; for as long as the Enemies of the State are diverted by publick Spectacles, their ſeditious Preachers muſt be in a wretched Condition.

But farther, the Stage is beneficial to the preſent Government, if you conſider a third Sort of People who daily frequent it, and they are ſuch who are always indifferent what Government they live under, ſo they can live but agreeably. Now theſe are, of all others, the moſt addicted to their Pleaſures, and would take it moſt heinouſly to be depriv'd of them.

Thus is the Stage beneficial to the preſent Government, if you conſider thoſe who are Friends to it, or Enemies, or indifferent. And the ſame may appear, from conſidering them all together. For nothing tends to the uniting Men more, than the bringing them frequently together, and the pleaſing them when they are aſſembled.

Thus have we ſhewn, that the Stage is beneficial to the *Engliſh* Government, and more particularly to the preſent Government; and that from the Nature of the People, and the Conſideration of thoſe who frequent our Theatres: We come now to anſwer what has been, or what may be objected from Reaſon, from Authority, and from Religion.

CHAP. III.

The Objections from AUTHORITY *anſwer'd.*

WE will begin with the Objections which are brought from Authority: The Authorities are numerous which Mr. *Collier* has produc'd in the laſt Chapter of his Book; which Chapter is levelled againſt the Stage and Dramatick Poetry in general, as any one may ſee by peruſing the firſt Paragraph. Now I would fain ask Mr. *Collier*, Whether the Buſineſs of Plays is not to recommend Virtue, and diſcountenance Vice; and to bring every thing that is ill, under Infamy and Neglect? Whether the Poets, if they pleas'd, might not be ſerviceable to this Purpoſe; and the Stage be very ſignificant? What will he ſay to this? Will he deny it? Why then did he affirm it in theſe very Words in his Introduction to his Book? Well, will he confeſs it? Then why this pedantick Scrowl of Authorities to oppoſe the Truth? Or of what Significancy is human Authority againſt human Reaſon? But yet, to ſhew the ungenerous Temper of this

this Adverſary to Dramatick Poetry, and conſequently to human Learning, I ſhall make it appear, that of all the Authorities which he has produc'd, ſeveral make in Defence of the Stage, and not one of them makes againſt it.

The Objections are of two Sorts. The Opinions of particular Stateſmen, and the Sentiments of States in general. We ſhall anſwer the Authorities which are brought from both, in the ſame Order as they are cited by Mr. *Collier*.

The two firſt which he brings, are *Plato* and *Xenophon*, in the 234th Page. *Plato*, ſays Mr. *Collier*, has baniſh'd Plays from his Commonwealth: But what can be concluded from thence? That they ought to be expell'd from the *Engliſh* Government? When every body knows that the Commonwealth of *Plato* is a mere romantick Notion, with which human Nature, and human Life, and, by conſequence, Dramatick Poetry, cannot poſſibly agree. *Machiavel* may give a ſolid Anſwer to this in the fifteenth Chapter of his *Prince*. *Some Men*, ſays he, *have form'd States and Sovereignties in their own Fancies, ſuch as never were, and as never will be. But the Diſtance is ſo very great between what Men are, and what they ought to be, that the Stateſman who leaves that which is, to follow that which ought to be, ſeeks his own Deſtruction, rather than his Preſervation. And, by conſequence, he*

who makes Profeſſion of being perfectly good, among too many others who are not perfectly ſo, ſooner, or later, muſt certainly periſh.

But what has thus exaſperated *Plato* againſt the Drama? Why it raiſes the Paſſions, ſays he, and is, by conſequence, an Enemy to Morality. But *Ariſtotle*, who, as Mr. *Collier* in this very Page unhappily owns, ſaw as far into human Nature as any Man; *Ariſtotle* has declar'd, that Tragedy, by exciting the Paſſions purges them, and reduces them to a juſt Mediocrity, and is, by conſequence, a Promoter of Virtue.

As *Plato* has laid the Plan of a notional Commonwealth, *Xenophon* has given an Account in his *Cyropædia* of a romantick Monarchy; in which he ſays, That the *Perſians* would not ſuffer their Youth to hear any thing that was amorous or tawdry. But what can this Man mean by bringing this as an Authority againſt the Stage, and the Drama in general? For can any one be ſo abſurd as to imagine, that this was intended by *Xenophon* to condemn the Gravity, and Severity, and Majeſty of *Euripides*'s Plays? Thoſe Plays which are ſaid to be, in Part, the Productions of the wiſeſt and moſt virtuous of all the Philoſophers of *Xenophon*'s honoured incomparable Maſter, *Socrates*.

The next, whoſe Authority is produc'd, is *Ariſtotle*; produc'd for what? Why to

overthrow the Authority of that very Sort of Writing, which is eſtabliſh'd upon his own Rules. Well! And what ſays *Ariſtotle?* Why in his Politicks he lays it down for a Rule, that the Law ought to forbid young People the ſeeing of Comedies, ſuch Permiſſions not being ſafe, till Age and Diſcipline had form'd them in Sobriety, fortify'd their Virtue, and made it, as it were, Proof againſt Debauchery. And what are theſe Words of *Ariſtotle* cited to ſhew? Why, that Plays in general are the Nurſeries of Vice, the Corruption of Youth, and the Grievance of the Country, where they are ſuffer'd; for that was the thing which, in the firſt Paragraph of this ſixth Chapter, Mr. *Collier* propounded to ſhew. Now can any thing in Nature be more unreaſonable than this?

For in the firſt Place it can never be; no, not ſo much as pretended, that *Ariſtotle*, in this Place, requires the forbidding any thing but only Comedy, which is but one Sort of Dramatick Poetry; nor can it be ſo much as pretended, that he requires that this ſhould be forbidden to any but Boys. Nor, ſecondly, is it probable that *Ariſtotle* meant this of any thing but only that Sort of ancient Comedy, which has no Reſemblance with ours. For I have two Reaſons to perſuade me, that *Ariſtotle* meant this of only the old and the middle Comedy. The firſt Reaſon is, that in all

likelihood *Ariſtotle* writ his Politicks while he was Governor to *Alexander*, which was before the Eſtabliſhment of the new Comedy. For *Ariſtotle*, in his Morals, commends the Reſervedneſs of the new Comedy, which may appear from Mr. *Collier*'s Citation in the 160th Page of this very Book. The ſecond Reaſon is, That I can hardly believe that *Ariſtotle* would have left Rules for the writing of Comedy, if he had believ'd that Comedy in general is a Corrupter of Youth. What, then, *Ariſtotle*, in all Probability, meant only of the horrible Licence of the old and middle Comedy, which yet he requires to be forbidden only to Boys, is here implied to be levelled againſt Dramatick Poetry in general; when this very Philoſopher has declar'd, that nothing is more proper than Tragedy for the Entertainment even of Youth, pronouncing it more grave and more moral than Hiſtory, and more inſtructive than Philoſophy.

The next who enters the Liſts is *Cicero*, who, as Mr. *Collier* aſſures us, cries out upon licentious Plays and Poems, as the Bane of Sobriety and wiſe Thinking, and ſays, that Comedy ſubſiſts upon Lewdneſs. To which I anſwer.

Firſt, That *Cicero*, in this Place, ſpeaks only againſt the Corruptions of the Stage, which Corruptions we do not pretend to defend.

Secondly,

Secondly, That *Cicero* in his fourth Book of the *Tuſculan* Queſtions, ſpeaks only againſt Comedy, which is but one Sort of Dramatick Poetry, whereas, in the very ſame Place, he implicitely commends Tragedy.

Thirdly, That even in condemning of Comedy, he is inconſiſtent with himſelf: And that if the Opinion of *Cicero* is of any Validity, it is as valuable *pro*, as *con*. *Cicero* in his Treatiſe *De Amicitia*, and *De Senectute*, implicitely commends Comedy. For *Lælius*, whom *Cicero*, by the Mouth of *Fannius*, extols above all the celebrated Seven whom *Greece* renown'd for Wiſdom; *Lælius*, who had the univerſal Reputation of the greateſt Stateſman, of the beſt Man, and the trueſt Friend of his Time; this *Lælius*, in the Treatiſe which bears his Name, is not only found to cite a Verſe with Approbation from *Terence*, but to mention his Acquaintance and Intimacy with that Comick Poet. Now I leave it to any one to judge, whether *Cicero* had not been very abſurd, if he had introduced a Perſon whom he ſo much extols as *Lælius*, a Perſon of that Gravity, and that Capacity, and one who had ſo conſiderable a Share in the Government of the *Roman* State; had not *Cicero*, I ſay, been very abſurd, if he had introduc'd a Perſon whom he ſo much extols as *Lælius*, openly acknowledging a Familiarity with

a profeſt Corrupter of the People? But farther, *Cato*, in that Treatiſe of *Cicero* which bears his Name; that *Cato* whom *Cicero* by the Mouth of this very *Lælius*, prefers for Wiſdom to *Socrates* himſelf; the aweful, the grave, the ſevere *Cato*, and the auſtereſt of the *Roman* Cenſors; this very *Cato* is introduced in the fore-mention'd Treatiſe, making honourable Mention of *Plautus* and *Livius Andronicus*.

Livy and *Valerius Maximus* follow. *Livy*, he ſays, *reports the Original of Plays. He tells us, they were brought in upon the Score of Religion, to pacify the Gods, and remove a Mortality. But then he adds, that the Motives are good, when the Means are ſtark naught: That the Remedy is worſe than the Diſeaſe, and the Atonement more infectious than the Plague.* In anſwer to which, I deſire leave to obſerve:

Firſt, that *Livy* in this Place of the Original of Plays, ſpeaks neither of Tragedy nor of Comedy, nor of the *Satiri*; which were the third Species of the *Roman* Dramatick Poetry; but only of the Rudeneſs of the *Ludi Feſcennini*.

Secondly, That *Livy* commends the Innocence of Plays, in the Purity of their firſt Inſtitution.

Thirdly, That he attributes by manifeſt Inference the Guilt and Corruptions of the *Roman* Stage, to Things which can have no Relation to our *Engliſh* Theatres. Which

is

is apparent from his own Words. *Inter aliarum parva principia rerum, ludorum quoque prima origo ponenda eſt, ut appareret quam ab ſano initio res in hanc vix opulentiâ Regnis tolerabilem inſaniam venerit. Among the ſmall Beginnings of other things, we are oblig'd to give ſome Account of the Original of Theatrical Repreſentations, that it may appear how a Thing that was innocent in its Inſtitution, grew up to ſo much licentious Fury, as to render it intolerable even to the moſt flouriſhing States.* From whence it is evident, that *Livy* in this Place condemns the Corruption neither of Comedy nor Tragedy, but either the Licentiouſneſs of *Liberius*'s Farces, or the Barbarity of the Fights of the Gladiators, or the Lewdneſs of the Pantomimes Motions, or all of them put together. For it is manifeſt to any one, who has the leaſt Tincture of the *Roman* Learning, that of the Comedies and Tragedies which were extant in *Livy*'s Time, thoſe were the pureſt which had been writ lateſt.

Fourthly, I deſire Leave to obſerve here, that the latter half of what Mr. *Collier* has father'd upon *Livy*, viz. *That the Motives were ſometimes good, when the Means were ſtark naught. That the Remedy in this Caſe was worſe than the Diſeaſe; and the Atonement more infectious than the Plague*; has no manner of Foundation in that Hiſtorian. From all which the Reader may diſcover the uncommon Sincerity and Integrity of this

Cenſurer

Cenſurer of the Stage. Indeed, without giving myſelf all this Trouble for the clearing of the Buſineſs, I might have left it to any one to judge, whether one of *Livy*'s extraordinary Senſe, who courted Reputation, and the Favour of the Publick, could have ſo little Prudence, or ſo little good Manners, as to uſe thoſe Expreſſions which Mr. *Collier* puts in his Mouth of the Drama itſelf, at the Time that it was cheriſh'd by the People, ſupported by the Magiſtrates, and eſteem'd a conſiderable Part of their religious Worſhip.

Now it is impoſſible that any thing could ſhew leſs Judgment than the following Citation from *Tacitus*, who blames *Nero*, ſays Mr. *Collier*, for hiring decay'd Gentlemen for the Stage; for what does Mr. *Collier* conclude from hence? That *Tacitus* condemn'd the Diverſions of the Stage? All that can be reaſonably concluded from it, is this, that *Tacitus* was of Opinion that *Nero* debas'd the Dignity of the *Roman* Nobility, by enrolling ſome of their Rank among an Order of Men, which among the *Romans* was reputed infamous. *Tacitus* was too much a Stateſman to ſay any thing againſt the Stage, eſpecially if the State of it, was in the Condition in which we are at preſent. He approves the Conduct of *Auguſtus*, in the firſt of his Annals, who after he had got

Poſſeſſion

Poſſeſſion of the Government, honour'd the *Roman* Theatre with his Preſence, not only out of his own Inclination, and Complaiſance to *Mecænas*, but becauſe he believ'd that Reaſons of State requir'd, that he ſhould ſometimes partake of the Pleaſures of the People. *Tiberius*, ſays *Tacitus*, was quite of another Humour. However, he had too much Policy, and too much good Senſe, to uſe his new Subjects ſeverely at firſt, after they had for ſo long together liv'd a gentle, voluptuous Life. Thus far goes *Tacitus* in the firſt of his Annals, and Monſieur *Amelot* has made this Remark upon the Place: A Prince in the Beginning of his Reign ought not to alter any of the eſtabliſhed Cuſtoms, becauſe the People are very unwilling to part with them.

To what *Tacitus* ſays of the *German* Women, that they ow'd their Chaſtity to their Ignorance of theſe Diverſions; this may be anſwer'd, That, firſt, ſuppoſing *Tacitus* in the Right, that can have no Reflection on our modern Theatres: For the *Roman* Ladies may very well have been corrupted by the intolerable Lewdneſs of the Pantomimes, which Lewdneſs has no Relation to us. Secondly, It has been obſerved of *Tacitus*, that he is for referring all Things to Politicks, even Things that ought to be referr'd to Nature, and is for that Reaſon ſometimes out;

as

as it is manifeſt from Experience he is in this Caſe. For the *Germans* are now as much uſed to Plays as the *Spaniards* or the *Italians*; and yet their Women are much chaſter than the Women of thoſe two Nations. From whence it is evident, that the *German* Women owe their Chaſtity to the Rudeneſs of their Manners, and to their Want of Attraction, and to the Coldneſs of their Conſtitution.

In the Hurry of my Diſpatch, I had almoſt forgot to return to *Valerius Maximus*; *Who*, ſays Mr. *Collier*, *being Contemporary with* Livy, *gives much the ſame Account of the Riſe of Theatres at* Rome. *'Twas Devotion which built them. And as for the Performances of thoſe Places which Mr.* Dryden *calls the Ornaments, this Author cenſures as the Blemiſhes of Peace. And, which is more, he affirms, that they were the Occaſions of Civil Diſtractions, and that the State firſt bluſh'd, and then bled for the Entertainment. He concludes, the Conſequences of Plays intolerable, and that the* Maſſilienſes *did well in clearing their Country of them.* Now here in one Citation, Mr. *Collier* has made no leſs than four or five Miſtakes, whether thro' Malice or Ignorance, I muſt leave the Reader to judge. For in the firſt Place, *Valerius Maximus* cenſures neither Comedies nor Tragedies as the Blemiſhes of Peace, and if Mr. *Collier* by Theatre does not mean them, he means nothing that concerns us.

In

In the next Place he does not affirm, that either they or any of the publick Spectacles were the Occaſions of Civil Diſtractions. In the third Place, He does not affirm, that the State either bluſh'd or bled for the Repreſentation of Plays. In the fourth Place, The Refuſal of the *Maſſilienſes* to admit of Dramatical Repreſentations can never argue any thing, not only becauſe the Conſent of Nations is againſt that little State, but becauſe we cannot conclude from their Refuſal, that they did not approve of them.

That all this may appear, I am oblig'd to tranſcribe what he ſays. *Proximus militaribus inſtitutis ad urbana caſtra, id eſt, Theatra gradus faciendus eſt, quoniam hæc quoque ſepenumero animoſas acies inſtruxerunt, excogitataque cultus Deorum & hominum delectationis cauſa, non ſine aliquo pacis rubore voluptatem & religionem civili ſanguine ſenicorum portentorum gratia, maculârunt.* *From military Inſtitutions let us proceed to our City Camps, that is, to Theatres. For theſe too have often ſhewn mighty Armies drawn up, and being firſt deſign'd for the Worſhip of the Gods, and for the Delights of Men, defiled our Pleaſure and our Religion with the Blood of the People.*

Where we may take Notice of three Things. 1. That *Valerius Maximus* implicitely commends the original Inſtitution of Theatres. 2. That he charges that which

which was blameable in them upon the Combats of the Gladiators. Thirdly, The Repreſentation of Plays was ſo far from cauſing Civil Diſtractions, that upon the firſt Repreſentation of the *Ludi Feſcennini*, 390 Years after the building of the City, the Patricians and Plebeians were quiet for above eight Years, which was more than they had been for above a hundred Years before. And after the firſt Repreſentation of Comedies and Tragedies, which was in the five hundred and fourteenth Year of the City, there was never any Civil Diſſention, or at leaſt never but once, till the Sedition of *Tiberius Gracchus*, which was above an hundred Years after. Mr. *Collier* tranſlates *civili ſanguine macularunt*, *cauſed Civil Diſtractions*, as if Plays were the principal Cauſe of the Diſſentions between the Commons and the Patricians; whereas thoſe Diſſentions were natural to the Conſtitution of the *Roman* State, mere neceſſary Conſequences of enlarging their Empire, and by that Means encreaſing the Number and Force of the Commons, as *Machiavel* has declared in the ſixth Chapter of the firſt Book of his Diſcourſes.

As for the *Maſſilians*, they will be better included under the Authorities which Mr. *Collier* has brought in the ſecond Place from States.

In examining the Authorities which Mr. *Collier* has brought from States, it will

will be convenient to ſay a Word to the Proceeding of the *Maſſilians*, as it is cited from *Valerius Maximus*; who commends them for refuſing to admit Plays among them. But, firſt, the Refuſal of this petty State can be of very ſmall Significancy againſt the Conſent of Nations. Secondly, This Refuſal is no Sign of their Diſeſteem of the Drama, but only of the Prudence of their Conduct. For Expence, and any thing which looks like Magnificence, are deſtructive to little States, which can never ſubſiſt without extream Frugality.

But the Athenians, ſays Mr. *Collier*, for which he cites *Plutarch*, *thought Comedy ſo unreputable a Performance, that they made a Law that no Judge of the* Areopagus *ſhould make one.* To which we reply, that this Citation of *Plutarch* is abſolutely falſe; and that if it were true, it could not be ſo much as pretended that it concluded againſt any thing but Comedy, which is but one Species of Dramatick Poetry; and that in Reality it would be of no Force againſt that.

What *Plutarch* ſays, is not that the *Athenians* made a Law, that none of the *Areopagi* ſhould make a Comedy; for one might as well ſuppoſe that it ſhould be enacted by an *Engliſh* Parliament, that none of the twelve Judges ſhould write a Farce. That which *Plutarch* ſays is this, That the

Council

Council of *Areopagus* eſtabliſh'd a Law, that no Man whatever ſhould make any Comedies. From whence it is manifeſt, that this Law was made in the Time of the old Comedy, and long before that came to any Perfection. For Comedy, as is apparent from *Ariſtotle*'s Treatiſe of Poetry, was very much diſcourag'd at firſt: Indeed at firſt they were ſo intolerably ſcandalous, that they were thought to be prejudicial to the State. And it was a long Time before the Magiſtrates could be prevail'd upon to be at the Expence of the Chorus. But after the Magiſtrates were at the Expence of the Chorus, 'tis abſurd to imagine that a Law ſhould be preferred againſt the writing that Sort of Poem which was repreſented at the publick Expence.

So that a Citation which Mr. *Collier* has brought againſt the Stage in general, is of no Force we ſee againſt Tragedy, nor agāinſt the new Comedy, no, nor ſo much as againſt the old one, as it ſtood in the Time of *Eupolis* and *Ariſtophanes*. Mr. *Collier* brings the Words of his Authors, but leaves us to look for their Senſe, and yet he would take it very ill to have that return'd upon him, which he has ſaid of Mr. *Durfey*, that he is, at leaſt in his Citations, *vox, & præterea nihil.*

But he proceeds to the *Lacedæmonians*, and ſays, that they who were remarkable for

for the Wiſdom of their Laws, the Sobriety of their Manners, and their breeding of brave Men, would not endure the Stage in any Form, nor under any Regulation. This Citation too is from *Plutarch*, and juſt of as much Validity againſt the Stage as the other. For what can Mr. *Collier* conclude from hence, That the *Spartans* diſapprov'd of the Drama? Why then did they frequent the Theatre while they ſojourn'd at *Athens*? As it is plain that they did, both from the *Cato Major* of *Cicero*, and from *Valerius Maximus*, Cap. 5. Lib. 4. All that can be concluded, from what *Plutarch* ſays of the *Lacedæmonians*, is, that the Drama was not ſo agreeable to the Nature of the *Spartan* Government, it being incompatible with rigid Poverty, and with Fewneſs of Subjects, which, as *Machiavel* obſerves, in the Sixth Chapter of the firſt Book of his Diſcourſes, were the two Fundamentals of their Conſtitution. But then Mr. *Collier* may be pleaſed to obſerve, that no Sort of Poetry flouriſhed in that Government, nor Hiſtory, nor Eloquence, nor written Philoſophy. For, as we obſerv'd above, the Arts never flouriſh'd in any Country where the Drama was decay'd or diſcourag'd, and in thoſe Places where they have flouriſhed, as they have riſen, they have ſunk with the Stage.

But tho' the Drama was inconſiſtent with the Nature of the *Spartan* Government, it is ſo remarkably agreeable to ours, that the Stage with us was never attempted till the late Civil Wars, and then too by thoſe who had firſt broke in upon our Conſtitution; and as it roſe again with the Hierarchy and with the Monarchy, we have ſeen it now attempted a ſecond Time, by thoſe, who, by their Writings and by their Examples, have ſtrenuouſly endeavour'd to ruin both Church and State.

The next Authority is brought from the *Romans*. Tully *informs us*, ſays Mr. *Collier*, *That their Predeceſſors counted all Stage-Plays uncreditable and ſcandalous. Inſomuch that any* Roman *who turn'd Actor, was not only to be degraded, but likewiſe, as it were, diſincorporated and unnaturaliz'd, by the Order of the Cenſors.*

This, Mr. *Collier* tells us, that St. *Auſtin* cites from *Tully* in the fourth Book *De Repub.* to which I could eaſily anſwer, That the ſame St. *Auſtin*, as he is cited by Mr. *Collier* in the 274th Page of his Book, having apparently done *Tully* Wrong in his Citation of one of his Orations which is extant; the Paſſage which he cites from the fourth Book *De Republica*, which is not come down to us, may be very juſtly ſuſpected. This, I ſay, I could eaſily anſwer; and to convince the Reader that I have very good Grounds for it, I think myſelf oblig'd to make

make it appear, that St. *Auſtin*, as Mr. *Collier* has cited him in the 274th Page of his Book, has done *Cicero* a great deal of Wrong. The Paſſage is this. *Their own* Tully's *Commendation of the Actor* Roſcius *is remarkable. He was ſo much a Maſter*, ſays he, *that none but himſelf was worthy to tread the Stage; and, on the other Hand, ſo good a Man, that he was the moſt unfit Perſon of the Gang to come there.* Now what will the Reader ſay, when I make it appear that *Tully* never ſaid any ſuch Thing? In order to which I am oblig'd to tranſcribe the Paſſage. *Roſcius ſocium fraudavit? Poteſt hoc homini huic hærere peccatum? Qui medius Fidius (audacter dico) plus Fidei quam artis: plus veritatis quam diſciplinæ poſſidet in ſe: quem Populus Romanus meliorem virum quam Hiſtrionem eſſe arbitratur, qui ita digniſſimus eſt ſcena propter artificium, ut digniſſimus ſit curia propter abſtinentiam.* i.e. *Has* Roſcius *defrauded his Friend? Can he poſſibly be guilty of this? Who, by Heavens, (I boldly ſpeak it) has more Sincerity than he has Art, more Integrity than he has Diſcipline; who, by the Judgment of the* Roman *People, is a better Man than he is a Player, the worthieſt of all Men to tread the Stage, by reaſon of his excellent Action; and the worthieſt to partake of the Magiſtracy, by reaſon of his ſingular Moderation.*

Now I appeal to the Reader, if this has ſo much as the leaſt Affinity with Mr.

Collier's Meaning? I have all this while done my utmoſt to keep my Temper; but I cannot forbear informing Mr. *Collier*, that Nature did not make the Ferment and Riſing of the Blood for Atheiſm, as he fondly imagines in the 80th Page of his Book; for an Atheiſt is a wretched unthinking Creature, who deſerves Compaſſion. No, Nature made the Ferment of the Blood to riſe againſt thoſe who are baſe enough to defame the Dead, by ſuborning them to witneſs what they never knew nor thought.

From all which it plainly appears, that I may deny very juſtly to anſwer to what is cited here from *Cicero*, ſince Part of it carries in itſelf ſuch a Manifeſtation of Falſehood; for how could Plays be accounted ſcandalous by the Predeceſſors of *Cicero*, when, before the End of the firſt *Punick* War, which was about two hundred Years before *Cicero*'s Time, the *Romans* knew nothing of the true Drama? for the Plays which were repreſented in the 391ſt Year of the City, were the *Ludi Feſcennini*. Now it was not quite a hundred Years after the Appearance of *Livius Andronicus*, who writ the firſt Plays, that *Scipio* and *Lælius*, the two greateſt Men of the State, whether you conſider their Virtue, their Courage, or their Capacity, encourag'd and aſſiſted *Terence* in the writing of his Comedies, and were his

his Friends by publick Profeſſion, which they would certainly never have been, if at that Time the *Romans* had look'd upon Plays as ſcandalous. 'Tis indeed very true, that the Profeſſion of Actor was not very creditable at *Rome*, but it does not follow from thence, that Plays were at all ſcandalous. Your common Fidlers are ſcandalous here, though Muſick is very honourable. The ancient *Romans* could not eſteem any thing that was religious ſcandalous. Their Plays were a Part of their religious Worſhip, repreſented at the publick Expence, and by the Care of the *Ædiles Curules*, the Magiſtrates who had the Care of the publick Worſhip.

I muſt confeſs I have a hundred Times wondered, why Players that were ſo much eſteem'd at *Athens*, ſhould have ſo little Credit at *Rome*, when the Plays had ſo much; when not only both Tragedies and Comedies were a Part of their religious Worſhip, repreſented at the Expence of the Publick, and by the Care of the publick Magiſtrates; but when the very Perſons who writ 'em were careſs'd by their greateſt Stateſmen, nay, and when ſome of the Poems were written by their greateſt Stateſmen themſelves.

But *Livy*, whom Mr. *Collier* cites once again, ſhall immediately clear my Doubt; for the young *Romans*, ſays he, according to Mr. *Collier*'s Citation, kept the *Fabulæ*

Atellanæ to themſelves. They would not ſuffer this Diverſion to be blemiſh'd by the Stage. For this Reaſon, ſays Mr. *Collier*, as the Hiſtorian obſerves, the Actors of the *Fabulæ Atellanæ* were neither expell'd their Tribe, nor refus'd to ſerve in Arms. Both which Penalties it appears the common Players lay under.

Here Mr. *Collier* ſeems to me to have made a very groſs Miſtake. For he has interpreted *ab Hiſtrionibus pollui, to be blemiſh'd by the Stage*, according to the noble Latitude which he gives himſelf in tranſlating; whereas it is very plain from *Horace*'s Art of Poetry, that the *Fabulæ Atellanæ* were acted on the publick Theatre immediately after the Tragedies.

Verum ita riſores, ita commendare dicaces
Conveniet Satyros, ita vertere ſeria ludo;
Ne, quicunq; Deus, quicunq; adhibebitur Heros,
Regali conſpectus in auro nuper, & oſtro,
Migret in obſcuras humili ſermone tabernas.

Dacier is of Opinion too in his Comment on the 227th Verſe of *Horace*'s Art of Poetry, that the *Fabulæ Atellanæ* were not only acted on the publick Stage, but acted by the ſame Players that the Tragedies were: In which he is apparently miſtaken; for in the firſt Place this Opinion makes him inconſiſtent with himſelf; as any one may

may ſee, who conſults what he ſays, upon the 231ſt Verſe, where he affirms, that the Actors of the *Fabulæ Atellanæ* had Privileges beyond what the common Players had. In the ſecond Place, the Paſſage which he brings to prove his Opinion, proves nothing at all. The Paſſage is,

Regali conſpectus in auro nuper, & oſtro, &c. which *Dacier* takes to be ſpoken of the Players, whereas it is manifeſtly ſpoken of the *Perſona Dramatis*, that is, of the God or the Hero.

From what I have ſaid, we may obſerve three Things.

Firſt, That the *Fabulæ Atellanæ* were acted on the publick Theatre. Secondly, That they were not acted by the Tragedians nor the Comedians, though they were writ by the Tragick and Comick Poets. Thirdly, That the Actors of the *Fabulæ Atellanæ* were not better treated than common Actors, becauſe they did not act on the publick Theatre. *Valerius Maximus* gives us the Reaſon why they were better treated, in the Fourth Chapter of his Second Book. *Atellani autem ab oſcis acciti ſunt: quod genus detectationis Italica ſeveritate temperatum ideoq; vacuum nota eſt, nam neque tribu movetur, neque a militaribus ſtipendiis repellitur.* From whence it is apparent, that it was from the Severity of that ſort of Poem, that the Actors of the

Fabulæ Atellanæ were treated more kindly, than the common Actors.

But now how came the Actors of the *Fabulæ Atellanæ* to be treated with ſo much Humanity, on the Account of the Severity of thoſe Poems, when the Tragedians incurr'd the Cenſorian Note? For Tragedy has infinitely more Severity than the *Fabulæ Atellanæ* could ever have. For the *Fabulæ Atellanæ* were partly ſatyrical, and had as great a Mixture of Raillery as have our Tragi-Comedies; whereas Tragedy, as all the World knows, is grave and ſevere throughout. That which follows, ſeems to me to be the Reaſon of this, and to be the true Cauſe why at *Rome* the common Actors were ſo hardly us'd, when Plays were ſo much eſteem'd by the *Romans*.

The firſt Plays that were repreſented by the *Romans*, were the *Ludi Feſcennini*, which were licentious and ſcurrilous, even at firſt, and full of particular ſcandalous Reflections; but in a little Time they grew bloody and barbarous; and that Cruelty of Defamation, to which they arriv'd, was in all Probability the Cauſe why thoſe who acted in them were ſo ſeverely treated by the State. And what inclines me to this Opinion the more, is the following Paſſage of *Horace*.

Feſcennina

Feſcennina per hunc inventa licentia morem,
Verſibus alternis opprobria ruſtica fudit:
Libertaſq; recurrentes accepta per annos
Luſit amabiliter: donec jam ſævus apertam
In rabiem verti cœpit jocus, & per honeſtas
Ire domos impune minax: doluêre cruento
Dente laceſſiti: fuit intactis quoque cura
Conditione ſuper communi: Quin etiam lex
Pœnaq; lata.

Not long after theſe, appear'd the *Fabulæ Atellanæ*; and becauſe their Satyr was free from particular Reflection, and their Raillery innocent, and becauſe there was ſomething which was ſevere and noble in them; this might prevail upon the following Cenſors to exempt the Actors of the *Fabulæ Atellanæ* from the Cenſorian Note, and might occaſion a Law to be made, that theſe Actors ſhould be capable of bearing Arms.

It was a conſiderable Time after this, before Tragedies and Comedies were ſubſtituted in the Room of the *Ludi Feſcennini*. Comedy at firſt was cultivated moſt, as *Dacier* ſomewhere obſerves, and it was late before Tragedy arriv'd to its Height, tho' at laſt it fell infinitely ſhort of the divine Sublimity of the *Sophoclean* Tragedy. Now tho' the *Romans* were charmed with Tragedy when it was come to its Height, and conſequently with thoſe who

who writ it, and tho' they found it to be without Compariſon more grave, more noble, and more inſtructive than the *Fabulæ Atellanæ* were, yet they might probably think it below the Majeſty of the *Roman* People to aboliſh an ancient Cuſtom, and an eſtabliſh'd Law of the State, in favour of the common Players. Yet this can be of no Prejudice to our modern Players, becauſe all States have had unreaſonable Cuſtoms, and this of the *Romans* may be concluded to be ſuch, being directly oppoſite to that of the *Grecians*, and the *Athenians* particularly, from whom the *Romans* had their Laws of the Twelve Tables, which were the moſt venerable of all their Laws. What I have already ſaid, anſwers the *Theodoſian* Code, and ſo I come to that which he calls our own Conſtitution, from that which breaks our Conſtitution.

Neither of the two Statutes, which he mentions, page 242, can reach the King and the Queen's Servants, they being by no means in the Rank of common Players. The Theatre flouriſh'd under the Princes in whoſe Reigns thoſe Statutes were made, eſpecially in the Reign of the latter, which may ſerve for a Proof that the Severity of that Statute extended only to Strowlers.

All that can be concluded from the Petition to Queen *Elizabeth*, which is mention'd

tion'd in the ſame Page, is, that the Queen thought fit to ſuppreſs the Play-Houſes that were ſet up in the City, tho' ſhe allow'd them in other Places. And this was not without a great deal of Reaſon: For ſince the Intereſt of *England* is ſupported by Trade, and the chief Trade of *England* is carry'd on by the Citizens of *London*, it was not convenient that the young Citizens ſhould have a Temptation ſo near them, that might be an Avocation to them from their Affairs. And ſince it is apparent from Mr. *Collier*'s Citation, that the Queen, upon the City's Remonſtrance, ſuppreſs'd the Play-Houſes which were ſet up in the City, but ſuffer'd them in other Places. This very Citation is a manifeſt Proof of that Queen's Approbation of Theatres and Dramatick Poems.

That Reader who can expect that I ſhould make any ſerious Anſwer to the following Citations from the Biſhop of *Arras*'s Decree and the *Dutch* Gazette, deſerves to be laugh'd at, rather than ſatisfied. And I cannot imagine why theſe Gazettes ſhould be cited in the ſame Row with ſo many Philoſophers, Councils, and Fathers, unleſs Mr. *Collier* would ſlily inſinuate that they are of equal Authority. But 'tis high Time to proceed to the Objections which may be brought from Reaſon and Religion.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

The Objections from REASON *and* RELIGION *anſwer'd.*

I Now come to anſwer what may be objected from Reaſon and from Religion.

The Objections againſt the Stage, from Reaſon, are chiefly four.

1. That it encourages Pride.
2. That it encourages Revenge.
3. That it expoſes Quality; and by doing ſo, brings a conſiderable Part of the Government into Contempt.
4. That it expoſes the Clergy, and by endangering Religion, endangers Government.

The two firſt are general, and the two laſt particular Objections. I ſhall ſpeak to them all ſuccinctly.

Firſt, The Stage encourages Pride; a Quality that indiſpoſes Men for Obedience, and for the living peaceably. To which I anſwer, That if Ambition is meant by Pride, the Stage is ſo far from encouraging that,

that, that it is the Buſineſs of Tragedy to deter Men from it, by ſhewing the great ones of the Earth humbled. On the other Side, if Pride be made to ſignify Vanity, and Affectation, the Child of Vanity, 'tis the Buſineſs of Comedy to expoſe thoſe; which is ſufficiently acknowledg'd by Mr. *Collier* in the Introduction to his Book. But if by Pride is meant Pride well regulated, which Philoſophers call Greatneſs of Mind, and which Men of the World call Honour, then I muſt confeſs that the Stage, above all Things, encourages that, and by encouraging it, provides for the Happineſs of particular Men, and for the publick Proſperity.

I muſt confeſs, if all Men were perfect Chriſtians, there would be no Occaſion for this Philoſophical Virtue. But ſince that neither is, nor, if we credit the Scriptures, will be, and ſince this very Pride is the Virtue of thoſe who are not virtuous, and the Religion of thoſe who are not religious, I appeal to any ſenſible Reader, if it is not to this that he owes in ſome meaſure his Life, his Fortune, and all his Happineſs. For it is this, which, in a great meaſure, makes his Servant juſt to him, his Friend faithful, and his Wife chaſte.

'Tis this too from whence, for the moſt Part, comes the Security and Ornament of States. The Love of Glory goads on the conquering Soldier to his Duty, excites the

the Philoſopher, animates the Hiſtorian, and inflames the Poet. So that, in ſhort, from this very Quality, the Encouraging of which Mr. *Collier*'s undiſtinguiſhing Pen condemns, proceed almoſt all the Advantages that make private Men happy, and States proſperous.

But, ſecondly, The Stage encourages Revenge, which is ſo deſtructive to the Happineſs of particular Men, and to the publick Peace. To which I anſwer, Firſt, that the Stage keeps a Man from revenging little Injuries, by raiſing his Mind above them. Secondly, That if it does ſometimes ſhew its Characters revenging intolerable Injuries, and conſequently puniſhing enormous Crimes, yet by doing that, it deters Men from committing ſuch Crimes, and conſequently from giving the Occaſions of ſuch Revenge: So that we may ſet the one againſt the other. Thirdly, That perhaps it equally concerns the Peace of Mankind, that Men ſhould decline the revenging little Injuries which happen every Day, and ſhould ſometimes revenge intolerable ones, which very ſeldom happen. *Cicero* affirms in his Oration for *Milo*, that *Milo* had done a Service to the Commonwealth by removing of *Clodius*. From whence it appears, that that great Stateſman thought, that ſometimes private Revenges might be neceſſary for the publick Safety. *Servilius Ahala* did Service

to

to the State by removing of *Spurius Melius*; and *Scipio Naſica* ſav'd it from utter Ruin by the Death of *Tiberius Gracchus*. Fourthly, That ſort of Tragedy, in which the Characters are the beſt form'd, and the Incidents the beſt contriv'd to move Compaſſion and Terror, has either no Revenge, or by no means that Sort of Revenge which can encourage the Crime in others. If Mr. *Collier* had known any thing of a Play, he would have been ſenſible of this. If any Reader wants to be convinc'd of it, I refer him to what I have cited from *Ariſtotle*'s Poetick, in the laſt Chapter of the Remarks on *Prince Arthur*. But,

Thirdly, The Stage expoſes the Nobility, and ſo brings a Part of the Government into Contempt. This Objection ſeems to Mr *Collier*, peculiar to the *Engliſh* Stage: For as for *Molier*, ſays he, he pretends to fly his Satyr no higher than a Marquis. Good God! As if a Marquis were not above any Condition of Men that have been expoſed on the *Engliſh* Stage. This Trick that our Poets have got of expoſing Quality, is a Liberty, ſays Mr. *Collier*, unpractis'd by the *Latin* Comedians; where, by Comedians, I ſuppoſe he means Comick Poets. But it was very common with the *Greeks*: *Ariſtophanes*, *Cratinus*, *Eupolis*, and all the Writers of the old Comedy, not only expoſed the chief

of

of the *Athenian* Nobility, but mention'd their very Names, and produc'd their very Perſons, by the Reſemblance of the Vizors. In Imitation of theſe, *Lucilius*, the Inventor of Satyr, as *Horace* tells us, ſpar'd none of the *Roman* Nobility, if they deſerv'd the Laſh; no, not even Perſons of Conſular Dignity. And yet, as *Boileau* obſerves in his Diſcourſe upon Satyr, *Scipio* and *Lælius* did not think this Man unworthy of their Friendſhip, becauſe he had expos'd ſome of the Scandals to Quality, and did not imagine that they in the leaſt endanger'd their own Reputation, by abandoning all the Coxcombs of the Commonwealth to him. From whence 'tis apparent, that if the *Roman* Comick Poets did not bring the Nobility of *Rome* upon the Stage, it was for want of Opportunity, and not of Good-will. For how ſhould they bring the *Roman* Quality upon the Stage, when it is plain that they never laid their Scene in *Rome*, nor ſo much as in *Italy?* The *Latin* Comick Poets tranſlated the *Greeks*; now the old and the middle Comedy they could not tranſlate, becauſe the old Comedy deſcribing particular Perſons, and the middle one particular Adventures, thoſe Comedies muſt have loſt moſt of their Graces upon the Theatre of another State. The *Latins* then tranſlated the new Comedy, in which indeed the *Athenian* Nobility

was

was never expos'd, becauſe it was impracticable in that Way of Writing. For the *Athenians* had no Titles among them; becauſe thoſe People who were truly great, knew that real Greatneſs conſiſted in Merit and Virtue; but when that real Greatneſs forſook the World, a titular Greatneſs, the Shadow of the other, was introduc'd to ſupply it; a mere Invention to cajole People, and perſuade them that they might be noble without Virtue. Now the *Athenians* having no Titles, I cannot conceive how the *Athenian* Nobility could be poſſibly expos'd by *Menander*, or any of the Writers of the new Comedy. For, to ſet the Mark of Quality on any one of their Characters, there was either a Neceſſity of mentioning his Name, or deſcribing his Perſon, or his particular Employment in the State; the doing which, would have thrown them back upon the old or middle Comedy, which were both forbid by the Law. From all which it appears, that the *Romans* in this Caſe are not againſt us, and the *French* are clearly on our Sides. But to come to the Reaſon of the Thing; if a Lord may not be ſhewn a Fool upon the Stage, I would fain ask Mr. *Collier* what Fools a Comick Poet may lawfully ſhew there, and at what Condition of Men he is oblig'd to ſtop? I would fain know whether a Poet may be allow'd to dub his Dramatical Cox-

combs? May he ſhew a Fool a Knight Baronet, or a Knight Batchelor? Or are they too included in Quality? Muſt he be oblig'd to go no further than 'Squire? And muſt Fool and 'Squire continue to be Terms ſynonymous? If any of Mr. *Collier*'s Acquaintance will give himſelf the Diverſion of asking him theſe Queſtions, I dare engage that he will find him embarraſs'd ſufficiently.

But methinks neither the Lords nor we are oblig'd to Mr. *Collier* for his extraordinary Civility. For if a Lord is capable of committing Extravagancies as well as another Man, why ſhould Mr. *Collier* endeavour to perſuade him that he is above it? Or why ſhould he hinder him from being reclaim'd? Unleſs he would imply, that a Commoner may be corrected when he grows extravagant, but that when a Lord grows fantaſtick, he is altogether incorrigible. Nor are we oblig'd to Mr. *Collier* any more than the Peers are? For ſince the bare Advantage of their Conditions makes ſome of them already grow almoſt inſupportable, why ſhould any one endeavour to add to their Vanity, by exempting them from common Cenſure?

Beſides, ſince Follies ought to be expoſed, the Follies of the Great are the fitteſt, as being moſt conſpicuous and moſt contagious. The Follies of the meaner Sort are often

often the Effects of Ignorance, and merit Compaſſion, rather than Contempt. Affected Follies are the moſt deſpicable; now Affectation is the Child of Vanity, and Vanity of Condition.

But why ſhould a Lord be free from Dramatical Cenſure, when he can be corrected no where but upon the Stage? A Commoner may be corrected in Company, but ſuch friendly Admonition to a Lord, may be interpreted Scandal.

For our Comick Poets, I dare engage that no Men reſpect our Nobility more than they do: They know very well that their Titles illuſtrate their Merit, and adorn their Virtue; but that thoſe whom they expoſe, are ſuch whoſe Follies and whoſe Vices render their Titles ridiculous: And yet that they expoſe them no more than the reſt of the King's Subjects. For Folly, as well as Vice, is perſonal, and the Satyr of Comedy falls not upon the Order of Men out of which the ridiculous Characters are taken, but upon the Perſons of all Orders who are affected with the like Follies.

For they know further what Mr. *Collier* apparently never knew, that a Lord, in Effect, in a Comedy, ſignifies any Man. For the Characters of Comedy are always at bottom univerſal and allegorical: And the making Lords of their Comick Fools, can ſignify no more than to admoniſh our Men of

Quality that they are concern'd in the Inſtruction as well as others.

The fourth Objection from Reaſon is, That the Stage expoſes the Clergy, and ſo, by endangering Religion, endangers Government. But of this I ſhall ſpeak in the following Part of this Book, where I deſign to treat of Religion.

We now come to anſwer what is objected from Religion, which is, That there is no need of the Stage to make People good Subjects, for that the Pulpit teaches Men their Duty to their Prince, better than all the Philoſophy and all the Poetry in the World. 'Tis indeed undeniable. But the Validity of this Objection depends upon two Suppoſitions; which are, that all the Subjects of the State go to Church, and that all attend when they are there. Whereas it is manifeſt that our Atheiſts and Deiſts ſeldom go thither; and that our doubting, cold, and lukewarm Chriſtians ſeldom attend when they are there. But that the Stage, reduc'd to its primitive Purity, would be a Means to ſend them thither, and the beſt of all human Preparatives for the Divine Inſtruction which they would find there, is deſign'd to be ſhewn in the remaining Part of this Treatiſe.

The End of the Second PART.

THE

THE USEFULNESS OF THE STAGE.

PART III.

CHAP I.

That the Stage is useful to the Advancement of Religion.

Now come to shew that the Stage is useful to the Advancement of Religion. And, First, Of Religion in general. Secondly, Of the Christian Religion particularly, and more especially of the Reformed Religion.

Religion in general, or natural Religion, may be conſider'd as conſiſting of two Parts; the Things to be believ'd, and the Things to be done.

Firſt, The Things to be believ'd, are, 1. The Being of a God. 2. Providence. 3. Immortality of the Soul. 4. Future Rewards and Puniſhments. The Poet, and particularly the Tragick Poet, aſſerts all theſe, and theſe are the very Foundations of his Art; for in the firſt Place, the Machines are the very Life and Soul of Poetry; now the Machines would be abſurd and ridiculous without the Belief of a God, and a particular Providence. In the ſecond Place, let any Man ſhew me where Terror is mov'd to a Heighth, and I will ſhew him that that Place requires the Belief of a God, and particular Providence. In the third Place, Poetick Juſtice would be a Jeſt if it were not an Image of the Divine, and if it did not conſequently ſuppoſe the Being of a God and Providence. It ſuppoſes too the Immortality of the Soul, and future Rewards and Puniſhments. For the Things which in perfect Tragedy bring Men into fatal Calamities, are involuntary Faults; that is, Faults occaſion'd by great Paſſions. Now this upon a Suppoſition of a future State, is very juſt and reaſonable. For ſince Paſſions in their Exceſſes, are the Cauſes of moſt of the Diſturbances

ſturbances that happen in the World, upon a Suppoſition of a future State, nothing can be more juſt, than that the Power which governs the World, ſhould make ſometimes very ſevere Examples of thoſe who indulge their Paſſions; Providence ſeems to require this. But then to make involuntary Faults capital, and to puniſh them with the laſt Puniſhment, would not be ſo conſiſtent with the Goodneſs of God, unleſs there were a Compenſation hereafter. For ſuch a Puniſhment would not only be too rigorous, but cruel and extravagant.

The ſecond Part of natural Religion contains the Things which are to be done; which include,

1. Our Duty to God.
2. Our Duty to our Neighbour.
3. Our Duty to Ourſelves.

And all theſe it is the Buſineſs of Tragedy to teach; witneſs the Practice of the Ancient Chorus, as it is comprehended in the following Verſes of *Horace*.

Ille bonis faveto; & concilietur amicis
Et regat iratos, & amet peccare timentes:
Ille Dapes laudet menſæ brevis ille ſalubrem
Juſtitiam, legeſq; & apertis otia portis:
Ille tegat commiſſa Deoſq; precetur & oret
Ut redeat miſeris, abeat fortuna ſuperbis.

From which it appears, that it was the Buſineſs of Tragedy to exhort Men to Piety and the Worſhip of the Gods; to perſuade them to Juſtice, to Humility, and to Fidelity, and to incline them to Moderation and Temperance. And 'tis for the Omiſſion of one of theſe Duties that the Perſons of the modern Tragedy are ſhewn unfortunate in their Cataſtrophes.

Thus *Don John* is deſtroy'd for his Libertiniſm and his Impiety; *Timon* for his Profuſion and his Intemperance; *Macbeth* for his lawleſs Ambition and Cruelty; *Caſtalio* for his Falſhood to his Brother and Friend; *Jaffeir* for his clandeſtine Marriage with the Daughter of his Benefactor; and *Belvidera* for her Diſobedience.

Thus we have ſhewn, by Reaſon and by Matter of Fact, that it is the Buſineſs of the Stage to advance Religion, and it is plain from Hiſtory and from Experience, that Religion has flouriſh'd with the Stage; and that the *Athenians* and *Romans*, who moſt encourag'd it, were the moſt religious People in the World. And, perhaps, if we would come down to ourſelves, it would be no difficult Matter to ſhew that they who frequent our Theatres, have a great deal more of natural Religion in them, than its declared inveterate Enemies, who are principally Fanaticks and Jeſuits: For the Vices which are charg'd upon the Friends of the Stage, are,

are, for the moſt Part, the Effects of Frailty, and mere human Vices; whereas the Faults of its inveterate Enemies, are known to be diabolical Crimes, deſtructive of Society, of Peace, and of human Happineſs; ſuch as Falſhood, Slander, Injuſtice, Back-biting, Perfidiouſneſs, and irreconcileable Hatred.

I now come to ſhew, in the ſecond Place, that the Stage is uſeful for the advancing the Chriſtian, and particularly the Reformed Religion. The Chriſtian Religion has two Parts, the Moral and the Myſterious. The Moral conſiſts of Human and Chriſtian Virtues: The Human Virtues are a Part of Natural Religion, which, ſince the Stage advances, as we have ſhewn above, it follows, that it partly advances Chriſtianity. The Stage too, in ſome meaſure, may be made to recommend Humility, Patience, and Meekneſs to us, which are true Chriſtian Virtues: And tho' a Dramatick Poet neither can nor ought to teach the Myſteries of the Chriſtian Religion, yet by recommending the Human and the Chriſtian Virtues, to the Practice of our Audience, he admirably prepares Men for the Belief of the Myſteries. For this is undeniable, that it is not Reaſon, but Paſſion and Vice, that keeps any Man from being a Chriſtian. That therefore that moderates our Paſſions, and inſtructs

us

us in our Duty, muſt conſequently advance our Faith. So that the Stage is not only abſolutely neceſſary for the inſtructing and humanizing thoſe who are not Chriſtians, but the beſt of all human Things to prepare them for the ſublimer Doctrines of the Church. Now that which inclines us to the Chriſtian Religion, will incline us to the purer Sort of it, and that which has the leaſt Affinity with Idolatry, which is the Reform'd Religion. That which opens Mens Eyes, as the Stage does, by purging our Paſſions and inſtructing us in our Duty; and that which raiſes their Minds, will make them naturally averſe from ſuperſtitious Foppery, and from being Slaves to Prieſtcraft. And that which expoſes Hypocriſy, as the Stage does, muſt naturally make Men averſe from Fanaticiſm, and the affected Auſterity of Bigots. And therefore the Jeſuits on one Hand, and the Fanaticks on the other, have always been inveterate Enemies to Plays. This is remarkable, that the Church and the Hierarchy, ever ſince the Reformation, have flouriſh'd with the Stage, were depos'd with it, and reſtor'd with it. Thus have I ſhewn that the Stage advances Religion, and more particularly the Chriſtian Reform'd Religion. I come now to anſwer what may be objected from Reaſon and from Authority.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The Objections from REASON *answer'd.*

THE Objections from Reaſon are chiefly three. That the Stage makes its Characters ſometimes talk prophanely; that it encourages Pride, that it expoſes Religion in the Prieſthood. Theſe are ſo eaſily anſwer'd, that I ſhall diſpatch them in a few Words, and come to the Objections from Authority.

Firſt, The Stage ſometimes makes its Characters talk prophanely. To which I anſwer; That if the Character which ſpeaks, is well mark'd, and the Prophaneneſs be neceſſary for the Fable and for the Action, then the Prophaneneſs is not unjuſtifiable: For, to aſſert the contrary, would be to affirm, that it is unlawful for a Dramatick Poet to write againſt Prophaneneſs, which is ridiculous. A Poet has no other Way in the Drama of giving an Audience an Averſion for any Vice, than by expoſing or puniſhing it in the Perſons of the Drama. And here I think myſelf oblig'd to reply to ſomething

thing that Mr. *Collier* has aſſerted, in his Remarks upon Mr. *Dryden*'s *King Arthur*, which is, that they who bring Devils on the Stage, can hardly believe them any where elſe. But why, for God Sake? For a Man of Senſe always reaſons, but the Pedant aſſerts dogmatically. Did *Æſchylus* in bringing the Furies upon the Stage of *Athens*, ſhew that he thought they were nothing but a Poetical Sham? Why ſhould it be more Irreligion in us to bring Devils on the Stage, than it was to bring Furies in him? Can any thing be more terrible, than the ſhewing of Devils, if they are ſhewn ſolemnly? And can any thing that moves Terror, do a Diſſervice to Religion?

But, Secondly, The Stage encourages Pride. Indeed, I muſt confeſs, that even the beſt Sort of Pride, which ſome call Honour, and others Greatneſs of Mind, is not ſo very conſiſtent with ſome of the Chriſtian Virtues. But then I do not affirm that the Stage can be at all uſeful for the Inſtruction of thoſe who are arrived at any more perfect State of Religion; but for thoſe who are not, that is, for the Generality of Mankind, Greatneſs of Mind may be very ſerviceable, for the aſſiſting them to command their Paſſions, and the reſtraining them from committing enormous Crimes.

But,

But, Thirdly, The Stage expoſes Religion, by expoſing the Prieſthood. To which I anſwer, That to talk of expoſing Religion is Cant; for to expoſe Religion, is to expoſe Truth, which is abſurd; becauſe nothing can be expoſed but that which is falſe. If the Stage really ridicul'd Religion, inſtead of ridiculing Hypocriſy, ſome People, whoſe Religion lies in their Muſcles, would be more eaſily reconcil'd to it. For how many Books have been printed in *Engliſh* that have been levell'd directly againſt Religion itſelf? For what Reaſon then have none of thoſe Zealots, who have declaim'd with ſo much Fury againſt the Stage, writ any thing to diſſuade People from reading thoſe Deiſtical and Atheiſtical Treatiſes? For what Reaſon have they omitted this, unleſs becauſe thoſe Books only attack Religion, about which they never much trouble their Heads; but the Poets attack Them. The bringing a vicious or a ridiculous Prieſt upon the Stage, then, cannot be interpreted the expoſing Religion, but the ridiculing Hypocriſy. However, this is very certain, that no Poet ought to ſhew a Prieſt in ſuch a Manner, as to ſhew any Diſeſteem of the Character. But I cannot for my Life conceive why the bringing a fooliſh, or a vicious Prieſt upon the Stage, ſhould be ſuch an abominable Thing.

For,

For, ſince Perſons of all Degrees, from Monarch to Peaſant, are daily brought upon the Stage, why ſhould the Clergy be exempted? The Clergy have been treated by our Comick Poets with a great deal more Reſpect than the Laity: Becauſe they have hardly ſpar'd any Condition of the Laity, but none of the ſuperior Clergy have been ever expoſed in our Comedies; which is one Sign of the good Intention of the Poets, and that they only ſhew the Follies and Vices of ſome, while they reverence the Piety and Learning of others, and the Order in general.

And whereas Mr. *Collier* affirms, that foreign States ſuffer no Prieſts to be expoſed on the Comick Stage; To that we anſwer, That in Countries where the Church of *Rome* is eſtabliſh'd, they have ſome Reaſon to uſe this Niceneſs: For Prudence requires that the Magiſtrate ſhould always take Care of the eſtabliſh'd Religion, and the eſtabliſh'd Religion in thoſe Countries being almoſt all Prieſtcraft, to expoſe the Prieſts is there to expoſe Religion. Beſides, in thoſe Places Prieſtcraft and ſecular Policy have a nearer Alliance, and a cloſer Dependance on each other by much, than they have here; for the Prieſts are conſiderably aſſiſtant to the Magiſtrates in enſlaving the People. Beſides, in *Italy* and *Spain* the Inquiſition

Inquiſition rages, and Prieſts will be ſure to take care of themſelves. As for *France*, tho' they never had a Prieſt upon the Stage, yet they have a Poem which was writ on purpoſe to ridicule even the ſuperior Clergy. And by whom was it writ? By Monſieur *Boileau*, the moſt ſober and moſt religious of all their Poets. Who advis'd it? Who commanded it? Monſieur *De Lamoignon*, illuſtrious for his profound Capacity, renown'd for his Learning, and fam'd for his Piety; who believ'd that the expoſing that litigious Humour that was crept into the Regular Clergy, might do important Service to the *Galican* Church. And why ſhould our Magiſtrates make any Exception againſt the expoſing the Faults of the Clergy here, where the Religion is ſo pure, that to touch a Prieſt is by no Means to hurt the Religion.

And whereas Mr. *Collier* ſays, that to affront a Prieſt is to affront the Deity; ſo it is to affront a Peaſant, who is a good Chriſtian: Beſides, Affronts are always perſonal, but a Prieſt in a Play is a general Character; and the bringing an ill or a ridiculous one upon the Stage, rather proceeds from our Veneration for Religion, than from any Contempt of it.

And whereas Mr. *Collier* takes a great deal of Pains to prove that a Prieſt ought

not

not to be contemn'd becauſe he is a Degree above a Gentleman; that Defence methinks is not altogether ſo pertinent: For it is evident, that Perſons of Degrees ſuperior to Gentlemen are every Day expos'd on the Stage. And beſides, the way for a Clergyman to ſecure himſelf from Contempt, is not to boaſt of ſecular Advantages, which in him is truly ridiculous, but to ſhew his Meekneſs and his Humility, which are true Chriſtian Virtues.

Beſides, the Characters in every Comedy are always, at the bottom, univerſal and allegorical, or elſe the Inſtruction could not be univerſal. A ridiculous or vicious Prieſt in a Comedy, ſignifies any Man who has ſuch Follies or Vices, and the Caſſock is produc'd on purpoſe to ſignify to the Clergy, that they are partly concern'd in the Inſtruction, and have ſometimes their Vices and Follies, as well as the Laity.

The expoſing upon the Stage a Prieſt, who is an ill, or a ridiculous Perſon, can never make the Order contemptible, for nothing can make the Prieſthood contemptible, but Prieſts. He among them who writ the *Grounds of the Contempt of the Clergy*, ſays nothing, that I remember, of the Stage; but he ſays a great deal of their own Follies, and ſomething too of their Vices: Now the expoſing

theſe

theſe Follies and Vices, would be a Way to reclaim them, and ſo to preſerve the Eſteem that they have in the World.

This is plain from Experience: For the inferior Clergy is much more reſpected in *England*, than the regular Clergy is either in *France* or *Italy*, where they are never expos'd on the Stage. And their Lives are here leſs ſcandalous than they are abroad. They who have been at *Marſeilles*, may inform Mr. *Collier*, that it is there a very common Thing to ſee Prieſts, both ſecular and regular, who are Slaves in the Gallies for the moſt deteſtable Crimes.

It appears to be full as neceſſary, to expoſe a Prieſt, who is an ill Man, as one of the Laity; becauſe his Example is more contagious, and the Salvation of ſo many Souls depend on it: Whereas a Layman influences fewer. Beſides, a Layman often offends thro' want of Conſideration, becauſe he does not reflect, his worldly Avocations diverting his Thoughts from Religion; ſo that ſuch a one may have Returns of Conſcience. But an ill Clergyman cannot pretend Inconſiderateneſs, for it is his daily Buſineſs to reflect on his Duty; and conſequently ſuch a one muſt be a downright Atheiſt; and an Atheiſt ſinning on this Side the Law, has nothing to reſtrain him but the Apprehen-

ſion of Infamy, and the Fear of becoming contemptible.

Beſides, a Layman who tranſgreſſes, has his Rector, or his Curate, to remind him of his Duty. Shall a Clergyman, who is an ill Liver, go on without Admonition? Is that for his Advantage, or the Benefit of his Flock, or the Good of the Publick.

We own indeed that it is our Duty to be inſtructed by them, yet ought they ſometimes to take their Turn, and be ſubject to our Remonſtrances: As the *Roman* Conſuls, if we may have Leave to make ſuch a Compariſon, were accountable to the Tribunes of the People, by the Policy of that Conſtitution. Thus I have anſwer'd what may be objected from Reaſon againſt the Stage in general, and what Mr. *Collier* has objected againſt the *Engliſh* Stage in particular; I mean as much as was fit to be anſwer'd: For there is no defending the Immodeſty, or Immorality, or unneceſſary Prophaneneſs of ſome of our Plays. Let us now come to the Objections which Mr. *Collier* has brought from Authority.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

The Objections from AUTHORITY *anſwer'd.*

THE Objections from Authority are of two Sorts, Councils and Fathers. But now let me ask Mr. *Collier* this Queſtion, Were theſe Perſons inſpired, or no? That is, did the Spirit of God dictate whatever they writ to 'em? If he ſays it did, I have nothing to ſay to ſuch a Man, but abandon him to Eccleſiaſtical Cenſure. If he ſays it did not, why then I muſt tell him, that we live in an Age in which there are Perſons that are too judicious, and too generous to forego their Reaſons for mere human Authority. An Age in which we account it not only an Abſurdity, but a Sin to believe in any thing under Heaven; as well knowing that Reaſon is the Top of all human Things; and tho' not ſo ſacred as Revelation, is in ſome meaſure divine. For Reaſon is given us by God for our Guide, where we have no Revelation to contradict it: And both human Authority and Reve-

lation hold and depend on Reaſon. We always aſſent to Revelation's Divine Authority, becauſe Reaſon aſſures us, that we always ought to aſſent to it: And we ſometimes refuſe to acknowledge human Authority, becauſe we are convinced by Reaſon that we ought not to ſubmit to it.

For the Councils he has cited, I muſt tell him, That we are not oblig'd to acknowledge any of thoſe Councils infallible; but refuſe to be determin'd by their Decrees, unleſs they are confirm'd by Reaſon or Revelation.

Now I deſire to know of Mr. *Collier*, Whether he himſelf pays the laſt Deference to thoſe Councils, or no? If he anſwers, That he owns their Authority, how durſt he appear to have read ſo many Plays as he has cited throughout this Book, when the Decrees of theſe Councils, even in this very Caſe, appear from his own Citations ſo much ſtronger againſt the Clergy, than they do againſt the Laity? But if he anſwers, That he diſowns their Authority, with what prodigious Aſſurance can he offer to impoſe it on us, that while he takes his own Satisfaction, he may laugh at our Credulity?

But to come to the Fathers; They had their Reaſons for crying out againſt the Stage, which cannot ſo much as be pretended

tended to be Reaſons to us. They had chiefly five, and thoſe five Reaſons will ſerve to anſwer whatever has been cited by Mr. *Collier* in his long Eccleſiaſtical Scrowl.

Firſt, Plays in their Time were a Part of the Pagan Worſhip; and that, in the Beginning of Chriſtianity, was alone a ſufficient Motive to oblige the Fathers to forbid thoſe Diverſions to the new Chriſtians, ſeveral of which may be very well ſuppos'd to be not yet confirm'd in the Faith.

The Second Reaſon why the Fathers forbad the firſt Chriſtians Plays, was becauſe the Combats of the Gladiators were mingled with thoſe Diverſions, and ſomething which was full as barbarous.

Media inter Carmina poſcunt
Aut urſum aut pugiles. Hor. Ep. 1. l. 1.

The Third was the Geſticulations of the Pantomimes, which indeed were unſufferably lewd, and unfit to be ſeen, not only by Chriſtians, but by any civil People.

Let any one but conſult what Mr. *Collier* has cited from the Fathers, and he will find that theſe were three of the main Reaſons which prevail'd upon the Fathers to forbid the Chriſtians the Diverſions of the Theatre.

'Tis not lawful (ſays *Theophilus*, whom he cites firſt) *for us to be preſent at the Prizes of your Gladiators, leſt by this Means we ſhould be acceſſary to the Murders there committed. Neither dare we preſume upon the Liberties of your other Shews, leſt our Sences ſhould be touched and diſobliged with Indecency and Prophaneneſs.*

And *Tertullian*, whom he cites next, ſays in his Apologetick, *We keep off from your publick Shews, becauſe we can't underſtand the Warrant of their Original.*

But there are two Reaſons behind; the firſt of which was drawn from the Purity of the primitive Times. Which makes *Tertullian*, as Mr. *Collier* has cited him, cry out, Page 354, *But if you can't wait for Delight, if you muſt be put into preſent Poſſeſſion, &c.* By which *Tertullian* ſeems to allow, that Diverſions indeed are neceſſary, but that Chriſtians will find abundant Entertainment in the very Exerciſe of their Religion. This, I muſt confeſs, was very well directed by *Tertullian*. But if *Cato* was formerly laugh'd at, for ſpeaking in the Senate as if he had liv'd in *Plato*'s Republick, whereas he was really in the very Dregs of that of *Romulus*, how ſhall this upſtart Reformer eſcape Contempt, who has apply'd to this profligate Age, what *Tertullian* directed to thoſe fervent Chriſtians, whoſe Souls were flaming with divine Love in the Purity of happier Times?

Thus

Thus have I examin'd four of the five Reaſons, not one of which can be a Reaſon to us. For neither is our Drama a Part of idolatrous Worſhip, nor have we either Gladiators or Pantomimes; nor will the People of this Age be ſatisfy'd to be always entertain'd with the Scripture, but require other Diverſions.

But the fifth Reaſon is yet to come; by which it will appear, that theſe venerable Gentlemen are by no means qualified to judge of a Cauſe, of which it appears, even from Mr. *Collier*'s Citations, that they have not the leaſt Knowledge.

For, ſays the Biſhop of *Antioch*, whom he cites firſt, *The Tragical Diſtractions of* Tereus *and* Thyeſtes *are Nonſenſe to us.* Now could any Man poſſibly talk thus, who had the leaſt Knowledge of the Nature of Tragedy, and particularly of that Tragedy? It was below that Prelate to conſider *Horace*, for he would have told him,

Iræ Thyeſten exitio gravi
Stravere, & eltis urbibus ultimæ
Stetere cauſæ, cur perirent
Funditus, imprimeritque muris
Hoſtile aratrum exercitus inſolens.
Compeſce mentem.

Is the Moral which the Poet draws from this Fable, Nonſenſe to us? Is it Impertinence

nence in a Poet to tell us, that we ought to reſtrain our Anger, becauſe the indulging it has often brought Men into fatal Calamities? For had this Prelate underſtood this Affair, what could he have poſſibly diſlik'd here, the Moral or the Fable? The Moral? That methinks ſhould be hardly becoming of a Profeſſor of that Religion, which is therefore extoll'd above all others, becauſe it is more Moral. Was it the Fable then which offended him, or the Manner of conveying the Inſtruction? Methinks it is ſomething odd in a Chriſtian Prelate to condemn that Method of Teaching which was chiefly practis'd by his great Maſter, whom he profeſſes to imitate.

But now to come to the Author De Spectaculis: *What need I mention,* ſays he, *the Levities and Impertinence in Comedies, or the ranting Diſtractions of Tragedy? Were theſe Things unconcern'd with Idolatry, Chriſtians ought not to be at them. For, were they not highly criminal, the Foolery of them is egregious, and unbecoming the Gravity of Believers.*

Now let me ask Mr. *Collier*, Whether it be lawful for Chriſtians to read Hiſtory? It would certainly be the abſurdeſt Thing in the World to deny it. Now *Ariſtotle* has declared very formally, that Tragedy is more grave and more inſtructive than Hiſtory. And tho' when the Queſtion

Queſtion is concerning Grace, I will believe the leaſt of the Fathers before *Ariſtotle*, and all his Interpreters the Schoolmen together; yet where the Diſpute is concerning the Nature of Writing, and the Colours of Speech, I will believe *Ariſtotle*'s ſingle Teſtimony, before all the Fathers and Councils join'd in a Body.

Tho' Plays are forbidden by the Fathers and Councils, yet the Fathers own, and Mr. *Collier* owns, that they are not forbidden by Scripture: Nor are they forbidden by Reaſon. For who are they who frequent them? Who are they that approve of them? Who are they that have not the leaſt Scruple about them? Not a Parcel of Fools that are carried away by mere Imagination, and are only fit for *Bedlam*; but the beſt and moſt reaſonable Part of the Nation, and particularly a thouſand, whom I could name, that are conſiderable for their extraordinary Qualities. Now I cannot for my Life apprehend upon what Account any thing that is not forbidden by God, that is neither prohibited by Reaſon, nor Revelation, ſhould be forbidden by Men. We know what our Saviour has ſaid in St. *Matthew* of thoſe who teach for Doctrines the Commandments of Men, *c.* 15. *v.* 9, That it renders all their Zeal ineffectual. But then, ſays *Tertullian*, as he is cited by Mr. *Collier*, *p.* 245, *The Play-*

Play-houſe is implicitly, tho' not expreſly, forbid by the Scripture, in the firſt Verſe of the firſt Pſalm: Bleſſed is the Man who walketh not in the Counſel of the Ungodly, nor ſtands in the Way of Sinners, nor ſits in the Seat of the Scorner. But then ſay we, that nothing can be forbid by this, but what the Scripture or Reaſon have declar'd to be the Counſel of the Ungodly, and the Way of Sinners. Now, as we have manifeſtly ſhewn above, neither Reaſon nor Revelation ſays that of the Theatre. And as for the Seat of the Scorner, that Part of the Text can only be applicable to Comedy, and is full as applicable to the Preſs, and ſometimes to the Pulpit itſelf.

In the next Place, ſays the Author *De Spectaculis*, as he is cited by Mr. *Collier*, *p.* 262, Some have thought the Play-houſe no unlawful Diverſion, becauſe it was not condemn'd by expreſs Scripture. *Let mere Modeſty*, ſays he, *ſupply the holy Text, and let Nature govern, where Revelation does not reach. Some Things are too black to lie upon Paper, and are more ſtrongly forbidden becauſe unmention'd. The divine Wiſdom muſt have had a low Opinion of Chriſtians, if it had deſcended to Particulars in this Caſe. Silence is ſometimes the beſt Method of Authority. To forbid often puts People in mind of what they ſhould not do.* Thus, ſays *Tertullian*, ſays Mr. *Collier*. But for my Part, I both hope and believe that he

he wrongs him. For it is incredible to me, that a Father of the Church ſhould reaſon in ſo abſurd a manner. For the chief Reaſon why *Tertullian* affirms, that the frequenting of Plays is not forbid by Scripture, is becauſe the Crime is too black to be particularly inſiſted on. As if St. *Paul*, in the firſt Chapter of the *Romans*, had not deſcended to particular Crimes of a blacker Nature than this. Can we ſuppoſe that Scripture, which is a Revelation of the Will of God, and a Supplement to the Law of Nature, ſhould deſcend to condemn Things which Reaſon had before condemn'd as abominable, and utterly againſt Nature? And ſhall it take no Notice of Things which are allow'd by Reaſon, and the Law of Nature, (as we have ſhewn that the Theatre is) and which conſequently cannot be diſcover'd to be Sins but by the Light of Revelation? Could St. *Paul*, in the 5th Chapter to the 1ſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, be ſo particular as to deſcend to a Crime, which, when the Apoſtle writ the Epiſtle, concern'd but only one, who had married his Father's Wife, and which could never be ſuppoſed to concern very many, becauſe the Crime was againſt the Cuſtom and Conſent of Nations: Could the Apoſtle of the *Gentiles*, I ſay, deſcend to this, and think it too particular to mention a Sin which concern'd the Salvation of ſo many thouſands

thouſands who were then alive, and of ſo many millions who were to ſucceed them? Nay, could St. *Paul*, in 1 *Cor.* vii. deſcend ſo particularly, as to give his Advice againſt Marriage, which was neither forbid by Revelation nor Reaſon, but was highly warranted by both, as abſolutely neceſſary for the Propagation of Chriſtianity, and the Accompliſhment of the Promiſes: Could the Apoſtle, I ſay, deſcend to this, and take no Notice of a Sin of ſo black and damnable a Nature as frequenting the Theatres is by Mr. *Collier* pretended to be? A Sin too which endanger'd the Salvation not only of the Chriſtians to whom he writ, but thoſe who were to ſucceed them in all Poſterity? But, ſays *Tertullian*, the Apoſtle had no Occaſion expreſly to condemn what is condemn'd by Reaſon. But that which was a Reaſon in *Tertullian*'s Time does not ſubſiſt in ours, as we have plainly ſhewn above. But if any one at laſt ſhall urge, that the acting of Plays was condemn'd by expreſs Scripture, becauſe it was a Part of the Pagan Worſhip, and Idolatry was expreſly condemn'd; to this I anſwer, That nothing can make more for my Cauſe than this: For ſince the Spirit of God condemn'd the Repreſentation of Plays only as they were included under Idolatry, you muſt either ſhew that the Spirit of God did not foreſee that in Proceſs of Time they

they would ceaſe to be idolatrous, which to affirm is horrible Blaſphemy; or you muſt acknowledge, that by condemning them only under the general Term of Idolatry, he approv'd them, and allow'd of them, as ſoon as they ſhould be no longer idolatrous; or elſe you muſt be forced to acknowledge, that the Word of God is defective, and does not contain all Things which are neceſſary to the Salvation of his People. Beſides, it may be manifeſtly prov'd from St. *Paul*, that the Idolatry of them extended no farther than to the Repreſentation of them, which Repreſentation was render'd idolatrous only by the Direction and Intention of the Magiſtrates and Publick, at whoſe Expence they were repreſented; for St. *Paul* has ſufficiently warranted the writing them, and conſequently the reading of them, by citing a Verſe of a Comick Poet in the firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, ch. 15. v. 33. for if thoſe Writings had been in themſelves idolatrous, St. *Paul* durſt neither have read them while a Jew, nor cited them while a Chriſtian, Idolatry both to Jew and Chriſtian being alike abominable. But it is evident that he has cited them; for it is known to all the World, that *Evil Communication corrupts good Manners*, is a Verſe of *Menander*, and the *Corinthians* particularly could not be ignorant of it. Since then the Spirit of God thought fit

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to put the Verſe of a Comick Poet into the Mouth of his greateſt Apoſtle, as very fit for the Inſtruction of his People, and the Reformation of Mankind; and ſince the ſame Spirit has ſaid not a Syllable to condemn either Plays or Theatres, any farther than as they are included under Idolatry, it ſeems to be very plain to me, that he has not only approv'd, but recommended Plays to his People, when they are not corrupt and idolatrous. For the *Corinthians* ſaw plainly that St. *Paul* had read *Menander*; they were convinc'd that he had cited him for their Inſtruction, and conſequently that he approv'd of him: Since then they were ſatisfied that the Apoſtle read him, why might not they do the like, when St. *Paul* had not ſaid ſo much as a Word to diſcourage 'em? Now if the reading him could be allowable, why ſhould not the ſeeing him be equally lawful, when the Repreſentation ſhould ceaſe to be corrupt and idolatrous?

And therefore St. *Thomas*, and the reſt of the School-men, who liv'd when Dramatical Repreſentations were no longer idolatrous, have loudly declar'd them lawful; and they are at this very Day encouraged in Countries, where they are mortally ſevere againſt any thing that offends Religion, and where the Cruelty of the Inquiſition is moſt ourageous. Thus have I endeavour'd to ſhew, that Plays

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are inſtrumental to human Happineſs, to the Welfare of Government, and the Advancement of Piety; that Arts and Empire have flouriſh'd with the Stage, which has been always encourag'd by the beſt of Men, and by the braveſt Nations. After which I hope the Enemies of Plays will be reconciled to our Theatres, and not by peſiſting in their Averſion, affect to ſeem more wiſe than the *Athenians*, more auſtere than the *Romans*, more nice than the School-men, more cruel than the Inquiſitors, and more zealous than the Apoſtle of the *Gentiles*.

F I N I S.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM